Orality, Literacy and Performance in the Ancient World

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Edited by
ELIZABETH MINCHIN

BRILL

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CONTENTS

Preface vii
Notes on Contributors ix
Introduction xi
Elizabeth Minchin

PART I

POETRY IN PERFORMANCE

The Audience Expects: Penelope and Odysseus 3
Adrian Kelly

The Presentation of Song in Homer's *Odyssey* 25
Deborah Beck

Comparative Perspectives on the Composition of the Homeric Simile 55
Jonathan Ready

Composing Lines, Performing Acts: Clauses, Discourse Acts, and Melodic Units in a South Slavic Epic Song 89
Anna Bonifazi and David F. Elmer

Works and Days As Performance 111
Ruth Scodel

PART II

LITERACY AND ORALITY

Empowering the Sacred: The Function of the Sanskrit Text in a Contemporary Exposition of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa 129
McComas Taylor

Prompts for Participation in Early Philosophical Texts 151
James Henderson Collins II

Performing an Academic Talk: Proclus on Hesiod's *Works and Days* 183
Patrizia Marzillo

The Criticism—and the Practice—of Literacy in the Ancient Philosophical Tradition 201
Mathilde Cambron-Goulet

Reading Books, Talking Culture: The Performance of *Paideia* in Imperial Greek Literature 227
Jeroen Lauwers

Eumolpus *Poeta* at Work: Rehearsed Spontaneity in the *Satyricon* .. 245
Niall W. Slater

Index 265

PREFACE

The ninth conference in the international Orality and Literacy series ('Orality and Literacy in the Ancient Greek and Roman World: Composition and Performance') took place at the Australian National University in Canberra in June–July 2010. Some scholars attending this ninth biennial conference had attended all preceding meetings in the series; several participants had attended a number of the earlier gatherings; for others this was their first experience of the Orality 'network'. There is a degree of warmth and goodwill that distinguishes this series from many others, perhaps because the conference participants, drawn together from different fields by their mutual interest in oral theory, find their own interest sharpened on learning how the concepts of orality may be extended and applied across the classical world (and, of course, beyond).

The conference from which these papers emerged was supported by grants from the Australian Academy of the Humanities, from the School of Cultural Inquiry at the Australian National University, and from the Australasian Society for Classical Studies, whose contribution to costs enabled Australian postgraduate students to participate fully in conference activities. I gratefully acknowledge the support of these three bodies. I thank my three assistants during the conference period—Abel Chen, Sarah Hendriks, and Fiona Sweet Formiatti—for their support, and for their care and concern for our guests. And on behalf of all participants I express my gratitude to Dr Luke Taylor, Deputy Principal of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, who gave up an afternoon to talk to us about Aboriginal contemporary art and oral culture as represented in the Kuninjku bark painting from Western Arnhem Land.

To put together this volume, the outcome of the conference, has been a delight. Each of the papers included here offers us new insights into oral composition and oral performance in the ancient world, both before the advent of literacy and after. I thank all contributors for their willing cooperation in meeting deadlines; and I thank the readers from across the world, who responded so graciously to my requests to read and report on the manuscript submissions. I am more than a little grateful to Anne Mackay, an Orality and Literacy editor twice-over, for her sage advice at various stages of this project. Finally, I thank the editor at Brill, Irene van

Rossum and her assistants Caroline van Erp and Laura de la Rie for their assistance with my queries at many points in the proposal and publication process.

As far as style and formatting is concerned, I have followed certain rather relaxed precedents of earlier volumes in this series. Authors have been given the freedom to use English or American spellings and Hellenized or Latinized spellings of ancient Greek names. Abbreviations, however, follow *L'Année philologique* for journals and the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd ed.) for ancient authors and their works, and other common references.

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29 June 2011

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INTRODUCTION

This volume of papers from the proceedings of the ninth conference in the international Orality and Literacy series ('Orality and Literacy in the Ancient Greek and Roman World: Composition and Performance') takes its place in the Brill Mnemosyne Supplement series that emerged from the first Orality and Literacy meeting at the University of Tasmania in Hobart, Australia, in 1994 ('Voice into Text').[1] This was followed by meetings at the University of Natal in Durban, South Africa, in 1996 ('*Epos* and *Logos*');[2] at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, in 1998 ('Speaking Volumes');[3] at the University of Missouri-Columbia, in 2000 ('*Epea* and *Grammata*');[4] at the University of Melbourne, Australia, in 2002 ('Oral Traditions and Material Context');[5] at the University of Winnipeg, Canada, in 2004 ('Politics of Orality');[6] at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, in 2006 ('Orality, Literacy, Memory');[7] and at Radboud University, Nijmegen, the Netherlands, in 2008 ('Orality, Literacy, Religion').[8] The tenth meeting will be convened by Ruth Scodel at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in June 2012.

Just as the broader theme of the seventh meeting ('Memory') stood in contrast to the narrower focus of the sixth ('Politics'), so, complementing the thematic focus of the eighth ('Religion'), the ninth meeting ('Composition and Performance') invited scholars to engage once more with the major themes of orality and literacy studies—in the fiftieth year since the publication of Albert Lord's *The Singer of Tales* in 1960.[9] After Milman Parry's death Lord had continued the comparative work begun by Parry and himself on the (then) living South Slavic oral poetic tradition. The central finding of his 1960 publication, that composition-in-performance is a living process, has had a significant impact on Homer Studies. Lord's

[1] Worthington (1996).
[2] Mackay (1999).
[3] Watson (2001).
[4] Worthington and Foley (2002).
[5] Mackie (2004).
[6] Cooper (2007).
[7] Mackay (2008).
[8] Lardinois, Blok, and van der Poehl (2011 forthcoming).
[9] Lord (1960).

influence, along with that of his successors, has continued to make itself felt in various ways both in the world of Classical Studies and far beyond. This conference allowed scholars half a century later to reconsider that theme.

The Canberra meeting was interesting in two ways. Firstly, it was encouraging to observe a new generation of scholars building on the achievements of earlier scholarship on composition-in-performance and reception. Secondly, I was impressed by the new ways in which scholars today are working with oral theory and the original insights they are gaining thereby into the ancient world. The conference theme, 'Composition and Performance', prompted a variety of perspectives in connection with a variety of ancient authors: we heard papers on the act of composition, the nature of performance, vocalization in performance, composition and reception, and the mutual interplay between performance and text. Discussion moved out beyond Homer to Hesiod and beyond Plato to Isocrates, the orators of the Second Sophistic, and the neo-Platonists. We considered orality as a separate entity (as we observe it in oral traditional epic, for example) and, as well, we reflected on the mutual interactions of orality and literacy.

The chapters in this volume, representing a selection of the original conference papers, are arranged in an approximately chronological order. I have grouped together five chapters under the rubric 'Poetry in Performance' (Homer and Hesiod in performance) in Part I. Introducing Part II ('Literacy and Orality') is a comparative paper that opens a window onto another culture through the description of the performance of a Sanskrit text; the remaining five chapters reflect on oral practices in the 'literate' world of Greece and, to a lesser extent, Rome.

Poetry in Performance

Four papers take as their subject the Homeric epics, each considering composition and performance from a different viewpoint.

Adrian Kelly's energetic paper, 'The Audience Expects: Penelope and Odysseus', explores the dynamic between composition and performance in the context of the *Odyssey*. His focus is interpretation. In this exercise Kelly uses the fundamental principles of oral theory as his guide. In his reading of the recognition scene between Penelope and Odysseus in *Od.* 23, Kelly demonstrates that it is not possible to appreciate the scene in its richness unless one also recognizes the circumstances in

which composition took place: that is, that the poem was composed and performed in the presence of an audience that was 'informed' (I use Kelly's epithet here). He argues that the poet of the *Odyssey* knows how to exploit his essential resources—his repertoire of typical scenes and typical patterns—to achieve uncertainty and suspense in his audience; and that, had we not studied the poem as an oral composition, we would not have detected what made it so successful for a listening audience.

Deborah Beck also focuses on the *Odyssey* in her study of performances of song within the epic ('The presentation of Song in Homer's *Odyssey*'). Using speech-act theory to assist in her analysis, Beck distinguishes instances of direct speech, speech mention, indirect speech, and, finally, free indirect speech in the performances of the bards Phemius and Demodocus. She demonstrates that free indirect speech, which had previously been thought not to be observable in the epics, appears more often and at greater length in the songs of the bards than in any other kind of speech act. This observation leads Beck to reflect on an apparent paradox: that the effect of free indirect speech, through which the main narrator continues to have an explicit presence in the song, is to maximize the sense of separation between the bard Demodocus and the external audience of the poem; and yet this distancing effect does not lead to disengagement but to 'an even livelier vividness and interest'. Song is thus marked out in the text of the *Odyssey* as unique and privileged, as a form that is not as easily available to the external audience as are other forms of speech.

Jonathan Ready, too, takes up the issue of compositional practice. In 'Comparative Perspectives on the Composition of the Homeric Simile' he offers important insights into the mental processes of the oral epic poet as he selects the material for and composes the similes that are so characteristic of this tradition. Ready first reports on his observations of the composition of similes in the poems of the Yugoslav poets recorded by Milman Parry, Albert Lord, and David Bynum; then he examines the poems of Bedouin tribes in the Najd desert of Saudi Arabia. In each case Ready distinguishes similes that are idiolectal (unique to the poet), dialectal (unique to the regional tradition) and pan-traditional (shared with all other poets). From this perspective Ready proceeds to engage in a 'thought experiment' about Homer, suggesting that he too, as he selected the 'scenarios' for his similes, was able to draw on ideas that were traditional and ideas that were novel, and to synthesize them, displaying to his audience his great competence as a performer.

Just as Ready's study of songs within two well-recorded oral traditions has been able to throw some light on Homeric compositional practice, Bonifazi and Elmer's ethnopoetic study of the discursive practices of a South Slavic singer has implications for our understanding of the performance of Homeric epic. The paper, 'Composing Lines, Performing Acts: Clauses, Discourse Acts, and Melodic Units in a South Slavic Epic Song', attempts to identify the ways in which a singer articulates his song and marks narrative progress. Bonifazi and Elmer's task is to begin to identify and interpret the more flexible and ephemeral signs of narrative structure that an oral poet like Homer may have deployed, using as a test case Alija Fjuljanin's epic song, recorded in 1934. Here they observe the demarcation of narrative segments, noting the lexical items that serve as 'discourse markers', the syntax of the unit, as well as non-linguistic phenomena—vocal manipulations, marked pauses, and body language. Bonifazi and Elmer's conclusion that syntactical hierarchies of independent and dependent clauses are subordinate to the performative articulation of the song affects not only the way we read the text of epic, but also the way we interpret it.

This first section of the volume, as we turn from Homer to other figures in the cultural landscape, concludes with Ruth Scodel's paper on Hesiod: '*Works and Days* as Performance'. Starting from the premise that *Works and Days* was composed *for* performance, even if not *in* performance, Scodel asks what kind of performance it was. The invocation to the poem indicates for the benefit of the audience that the performance will be both a poetic performance of narrative and an explication of a prayer to Zeus (to enforce justice in the quarrel between Perses and the 'I' of the poem). The poem itself takes the form of drama; the audience is dropped into the middle of a speech that is already under way. But, as Scodel points out, the narrative of *Works and Days* does not appear to unfold against any one consistent backdrop. To resolve the uncertainties that this shifting structure generates, and the problems of coherence that we, as readers, detect, Scodel proposes that the poem is in some way mimetic. It represents a man who is speaking in the 'theatre of the mind': the arguments and the fables that are offered in the poem represent the imagined discourse of a poet who in these circumstances has the freedom not only to move about in time but also to address people not actually present.

Literacy and Orality

The second cluster of papers takes literacy, specifically in its relationship with orality, as its focus, often, but not only, in the context of philosophical and rhetorical discourse. We are interested here in texts that have the power to generate performance, whether it is the performance of a single individual or that of audience members more generally, and the nature of that performance. This section begins with a paper that offers us a first-hand perspective on another culture. McComas Taylor, in 'Empowering the Sacred: The Function of the Sanskrit Text in a Contemporary Exposition of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa', gives us an eye-witness account of a week-long public performance of a Sanskrit text—an oral performance, largely in the vernacular, that was, in Taylor's words, 'presided over' by the written text. Having given us an account of the performance ritual, and of the nature of the 'exponent's' oral contributions, Taylor turns his attention to the role of the text in the ceremony as a whole. He concludes that the text itself (in its ritual, structural, legitimising, and linking functions) guides the audience's reception of the discourse—as his title indicates, it 'empowers the sacred'. This comparative paper from the Indian tradition offers us a living example of the kind of interaction between text and performance that may have taken place in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds.

James Collins returns us to the ancient world and to the ways in which important texts may be brought to life again, and given new significance, in an oral context—as is the Sanskrit text studied by Taylor in the previous chapter. Collins begins with the texts of Plato and Isocrates—as texts on which subsequent performance is based; and yet his focus is equally on the readers and audiences of those texts. In 'Prompts for Participation in Early Philosophical Texts', Collins argues that literary and narratological study of Platonic dialogues and Isocratean discourse reveals a more open view of textuality than we usually accept. He proposes that Platonic dialogues, for example, invite interruption, participation, adaptation, and supplementation from the floor, so to speak. Thus these narrated dialogues, which began their lives as recollections of discussions about important philosophical questions, may become occasions for genuine engagement, and, as Collins puts it, for 'unscripted philosophical interruptions and departures'.

Plato had intended his dialogues in their written from to serve a mnemonic function, for his students who had already heard those conversations in the Academy. But, as we have seen in Collins' paper, despite

Plato's firm disapproval of writing as an appropriate mode for philosophical discourse, his dialogues continued to live on, as written texts that could spark further philosophical discussion. Several centuries later, Proclus and other neo-Platonists used writing as an adjunct to their teaching: for their lecture notes, for enlarging on lessons held in the school, or for producing material for students that might be discussed with a teacher—and that might later become a written text.

In their work on the ancient poets these neo-Platonist philosophers struggled with Plato's banishment of poets from his ideal state. As Patrizia Marzillo points out, in 'Performing an Academic Talk: Proclus on Hesiod's *Works and Days*', Proclus was able to limit Plato's ban to so-called mimetic poetry, allowing himself to produce written commentaries on the poets whom he deemed to be theological thinkers. Of these commentaries only that on Hesiod's *Works and Days* has survived. Its origin was in a course Proclus taught in Athens: Marzillo shows us how this work draws together Proclus' lessons and the ensuing discussions with his students.

These two papers that have described the use of philosophical texts as prompts for discussion raise an important question: what was the actual status of literacy in the ancient world, as far as philosophical discourse was concerned, *vis-à-vis* that of oral performance? Mathilde Cambron-Goulet explores this question carefully, introducing her chapter 'The Criticism—and the Practice—of Literacy in the Ancient Philosophical Tradition' with the familiar paradox that Plato's *Phaedrus*–a written text—includes an energetic criticism of literacy. In her study of the relationship between theory and practice Cambron-Goulet sets out first the ancient philosophers' criticisms of reading and their account of the shortcomings of writing; she then assesses what they consider to be the (limited) advantages of reading and writing. Amongst her conclusions she points out that the practice of literacy amongst philosophers remained tentative for a long time; that we should not see Plato as the last representative of a lost oral society, since the propensity to criticize literacy continued into Late Antiquity; and that we should acknowledge the originality of Aristotle, who first saw literacy as a means of developing knowledge.

Jeroen Lauwers, in 'Reading Books, Talking Culture', takes us into the world of the Second Sophistic. He too is concerned with oral performance, now the performance of *paideia*, which is the direct outcome of literacy, of having read books. To defend orators of the Second Sophistic against the charge that they had a limited acquaintance with the great

literature of the past, Lauwers considers the function of literature in the wider socio-cultural system. Although he does not discount the possibility that some orators were bluffing, he explains why the canon of texts which Second Sophistic orators apparently knew was so restricted. He refers to the performative context in which orators worked, pointing to, for example, a speaker's assessment of his audience's competence and the challenges of oral performance. Lauwers' conclusion, that the oral performative context has a marked influence on the place, and the reception, of literature in this period, invites us to rethink some easy assumptions that have been made about orality and literacy both in this period and more generally.

Niall Slater's paper, 'Eumolpus *Poeta* at Work: Rehearsed Spontaneity in the *Satyricon*', takes us, finally, into the Roman world, and allows us to view oral performance and the generation of oral performance from written texts in a more playful light. Petronius, in his *Satyricon*, presents us with the impoverished raconteur, Eumolpus, who tries, in a number of performances, to cultivate the image of a spontaneous, still largely oral poet. Slater will demonstrate that a key part of Eumolpus's poetic persona is the desire to present himself as a more spontaneous, more oral performer than he actually is—yet at the same time he is more confined by the practices and consequences of literacy than he himself realizes. The reception of his works by internal audiences of the novel can be read as further commentary on composition and performance, now in Neronian culture.

Elizabeth Minchin

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PART I

POETRY IN PERFORMANCE

THE AUDIENCE EXPECTS: PENELOPE AND ODYSSEUS*

Adrian Kelly

Abstract

The relationship between composition and performance lies at the heart of Homeric poetics, for scholars have long understood that the moment of performance is crucial for the generation, indeed realisation, of early Greek oral traditional epic. This paper proposes to analyse the recognition sequence(s) between Odysseus and Penelope in *Odyssey* 23 from this perspective, arguing that the episode can only fully be understood by recapturing the narrative's performative strategies: that is, those strategies designed to engage the attention of an audience specifically *at* the moment of performance.

I propose to elucidate this dynamism, for want of a better term, by setting out the structural 'grammar' underlying the construction of the scene, and then showing how the poet manipulates his audience's familiarity with that grammar in order to create uncertainty, excitement and meaning, to direct, misdirect and control their response, and on the smallest scales of narrative. When we appreciate the presence and pervasiveness of this interaction, not only can we feel the poetry's immediacy and vividness in a manner like that enjoyed by an Archaic Greek audience, but we can also apply a more nuanced understanding of Homeric technique to textual and scholarly *zētēmata*, as with the famous (and so-called) 'interruption' to the recognition sequence (111–163) in the current example.

Aside from these two advantages, the demonstration of such a specifically 'orally-derived' strategy can only help further to illustrate the origin of Homer's aesthetic within a tradition of recomposition in performance, and so the interdependence of the conference's twin themes.

This paper subscribes to an 'oralist' model of Homeric interpretation, one that seeks to understand the many ways in which the oral background to

* I would like to thank, firstly, Elizabeth Minchin for both her assistance with this article and for organising the *Orality and Literacy IX* conference at which the paper on which it was based was presented, and Christopher Ransom for reading that paper in my enforced absence. I would also like to thank Ruth Scodel and Deborah Beck for their stimulating comments and questions. Thanks, too, to Chris Pelling and Bruno Currie, at whose seminar in Oxford in Michaelmas Term 2009 the material underlying this article was first presented, and also to the audience at that seminar for their questions, doubts and discussion. Sophie Gibson and Bill Allan very kindly read both the paper and this article, and improved both—as always—tremendously.

the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* should be factored into our readings of, and interactions with, these texts. For such a perspective and, indeed, for the theme of this volume, the relationship between the terms 'composition' and 'performance'—usually, for Homerists, enshrined in the phrase 'recomposition in performance'—is of central importance, but these are all concepts which seem to be under assault in much contemporary scholarship. The 2010 *Trends in Classics* conference in Thessaloniki, for example, witnessed a large number of participants who either did not believe in the utility of these notions, or would invoke them only in order to get them out of the way as soon as possible.[1] Several of my own colleagues from Oxford seem to think that orality is a hindrance to the proper business of scholarship,[2] and if someone of Douglas Cairns' standing can write that

> the onus is now on oralists to demonstrate that there is any significant way in which the status of the *Iliad* as an oral-derived text precludes or limits the application of familiar interpretative strategies[3]

then we have a problem—or perhaps a challenge. And that is to demonstrate to an increasingly sceptical audience the continuing relevance of composition and performance to an understanding of Archaic epic poetry. In this paper I intend to affirm the importance of this relationship—and for both the textual and 'higher' criticism of the Homeric poems. I hope to show that the starting point for any interaction with Homer must be the fact that his style evolved specifically in order to deal with, and react to, the presence of an informed audience at the moment of creation.

Of course, we cannot say with absolute certainty that Homer himself was dealing with such an audience when he came to compose the poems we know under his name; that is an unknown, as indeed is the very process by which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* came into being. As far as possible, therefore, we should avoid basing the method on such easily under-

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1 Entitled 'Homer in the 21st century: Orality, Neoanalysis, Interpretation', its proceedings are to be published (edited by the organisers Antonios Rengakos and Christos Tsagalis) by de Gruyter in 2011.

2 For instance, West (2003: 14) wants "to shake the oralists off our backs", whilst Currie (2006) places literary dynamics (allusion, intertextuality) at the heart of his investigation into Homer's epic context.

3 Cairns (2001: 53). Such scepticism is not uncommon; Lateiner (2004: 29) speaks slightingly of "bean-counting, Parryistical scholarship" whilst Dowden (1996: 47) considers the question of 'interaction' between Homeric and other early poetry as "an issue which has been obscured by scholarly discourse in terms of oral poetics."

minable predicates. But scholarship since (indeed before) Milman Parry has shown that Homer's style, the stuff of his poetry, originated within the context of recomposition in performance. When we understand that, we come as close as we ever will to experiencing the contour of Homeric narrative, to understanding its structure and its direction, and thus to an appreciation of its dynamism.

To this end, this paper will examine the recognition scene between Penelope and Odysseus in *Odyssey* 23, partly because Aristotle famously characterised the entire poem as complex on the grounds that it contains "recognition throughout",[4] but mostly because this example is, as Norman Austin saw, "the great recognition scene of the poem".[5] If the study of typicality—one of the characteristic concerns of oralist scholarship—has any interpretative pay-off, then it should be particularly visible here. Accordingly, this paper will try to show how the poet manipulates the structural 'grammar' of that typical sequence in order to create uncertainty, excitement and meaning for his audience as they experience the narrative.

An important factor in the process was the fact that Homer's audience was not composed of first-timers: they knew that Odysseus would be recognised by Penelope, and they were—to varying degrees—familiar with the theme of recognition itself as a traditional narrative sequence. When we factor in the presence and pervasiveness of the interaction between the poet and this group, not only can we feel the narrative's immediacy and vividness in the same way as an Archaic Greek audience, but we can also apply a more informed understanding of Homeric technique to textual and scholarly *zētēmata*, in this case with regard to the famous (and so-called) 'interruption' to the recognition sequence

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[4] *Poetics* 1459b: καὶ γὰρ τῶν ποιημάτων ἑκάτερον συνέστηκεν ἡ μὲν Ἰλιὰς ἁπλοῦν καὶ παθητικόν, ἡ δὲ Ὀδύσσεια πεπλεγμένον (ἀναγνώρισις γὰρ διόλου) καὶ ἠθική.

[5] Austin (1975: 205). There have been, unsurprisingly, many studies of this scene; cf. Kirchhoff (1879: 538–559); Blass (1904: 222–226); Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1927: 68–71); Hölscher (1939: 73–75); von der Mühll (1940: 760–764, esp. 761); Focke (1943: 363–375); Page (1955: 114–115); Armstrong (1958: 40–43); Schadewaldt (1966 [= (1970)]: 58–78); Besslich (1966: 83–96); Bona (1966: 167–168); Müller (1966: 145–153); Merkelbach (1969: 97–99, 131–134); Kakridis (1971: 151–163 esp. 158 f.); Erbse (1972: 55–72); Eisenberger (1973: 303–313); Fenik (1974: 61–104 but esp. 64–65, 68–72); Emlyn-Jones (1984: 8–9, 13–14 (= (1998) 133–134, 138–139); Murnaghan (1987: 43–45, 139–147); Hölscher (1989: 284–296); Katz (1991: 166–170); Goldhill (1991: 5–24, esp. 15 ff.); Schwinge (1993: 104–124); Danek (1998: 441–463); Foley (1999: 241–262); de Jong (2001: 545–564); Heitman (2005: 85–103); Minchin (2007: 171–173). For further bibliography, cf. Heubeck (1992: 313–314).

(117–172).[6] In combining these two aims—literary and text-critical (though I shall place much of my emphasis on the latter, especially as the paper proceeds)—I hope to demonstrate that an oralist interpretation is not only useful, but fundamental to an informed reading of Homeric poetry. It does not 'preclude or limit' the interpretative strategies to which Douglas Cairns wishes us to return; on the contrary, it helps to make them better.[7]

From a certain—admittedly somewhat boyish—point of view, the opening of Book 23 comes after all the exciting stuff: Odysseus' reception into his own household, the battle with the suitors, retribution against the disloyal members of that household, and so on. The first 200-odd verses of this book do, nonetheless, describe a series of memorable scenes. Firstly, Eurykleia fetches a disbelieving Penelope from her bedroom (1–95); then there is the initial encounter between blood-stained husband and rather taciturn wife, during which Telemakhos rebukes his mother for not recognising Odysseus (96–111a); this is followed by an interruption or digression (apparently) from the recognition process in which Odysseus and Telemakhos take thought for what they should do now (111b–141a); followed in turn by the carrying out of their deliberations (141b–152), Odysseus' bath (153–163), and finally the resumption of the recognition process in which Odysseus rebukes Penelope before she tricks him with the riddle of their bed (164–204).

In coming to grips with this narrative, a first step is to remember that the summoning of Penelope, and so the beginning of the recognition, is already motivated by the instructions which Odysseus gave before the end of the preceding book, where he told Eurykleia to fetch Penelope and her servant women (22.482–483) and then the rest of the household maids (484). In a rather pleasant chiastic arrangement, the latter group is fetched first and they immediately recognise Odysseus and greet him (495–501). Consider the arrangement as follows:

[6] On the precise parameters of this passage, see below, n. 22.

[7] As Foley (1991: 4 n. 9) notes, "the kind of approach Griffin champions and the perspective from oral tradition are not wholly incompatible and in fact overlap and reinforce one another at many points, and ... traditional referentiality adds significantly to (rather than detracts from or mars) what we customarily think of as the literary quality of the Homeric epics and other oral-derived works"; cf. also Kelly (2007b: 378–409) for the same approach with regard to textual criticism.

A1 Odysseus orders Eurykleia to get Penelope and her servants (22.482–483)
B1 Odysseus orders Eurykleia to get the other serving women (484)

B2 Eurykleia gets the others; they immediately recognise Odysseus (495–501)
A2 Eurykleia gets Penelope; she (finally) recognises Odysseus (23.1–204 and ff.)

The much larger and more important fetching of Penelope and her recognition of her husband (**A2**) will take up the first several hundred verses of Book 23, and undergo prolonged retardation, but will eventually reach the same goal.[8] Penelope, as we shall see, will not be so easy to persuade, and the structural disparity here throws tremendous emphasis both on the coming episode and specifically her role within the narrative. But what it does not do is suggest any doubt about the eventual success of the process: the audience's expectations are at every stage cushioned by the poet's structural intimations, within which he strives to achieve his effects.[9] However, these effects are clear not just from the individual or actual patterns and comparisons, within the narrative, to which the poet seeks to draw his audience's attention as the performance proceeds. There is also a more abstract level of composition, the typical, in which an independent sequence, with its own associations and meaning, may be generated and manipulated within the narrative. This is not to say that the two strategies of communicating meaning—specific and generic—are unrelated; for every typical pattern is also an individual scene, with its own semantic relationships to the context, to other scenes and to the general demands of the performance.

1. *Eurykleia and Penelope (23.1–85)*

As mentioned above, the typical pattern evident in Book 23 is the recognition scene,[10] which occurs several times throughout the *Odyssey* but

[8] As Foley (1999: 243) says: "But against that background and that certainty ... Homer and his tradition create actions and relationships peculiar to these characters, this place, this singular story"; cf. also Schwinge (1993: 105).

[9] Felson-Rubin (1996: *passim* but esp. 164 n. 7) sees the poem's hints about other outcomes as a suggestion of uncertainty about Penelope's constancy; cf. also Katz (1991: 168–169). But these hints need imply no such thing, any more than the many parallels between Odysseus' *nostos* and Agamemnon's suggest uncertainty about the former's eventual success; *contra* Olson (1990).

[10] Cf. esp. Emlyn-Jones (1984) = (1990) and Gainsford (2003) for studies of the structure of these scenes.

nowhere else with the same fullness or complexity. This becomes particularly clear when we apply a range of the current schemata to the opening exchange between Eurykleia and Penelope, for we see that this passage contains almost every element possible in the sequence, and in an apparently jumbled order (as set out in the diagram below):

		Gainsford[11]	**Emlyn-Jones**[12]
4–9	Eurykleia reveals (~ foretells) Od.'s presence	R2	4
10–24	Penelope denies its truth	R3, R5	5
25–31	Eurykleia repeats Od.'s presence, and gives evidence	R2, R8	6
32–38	Penelope swoons in joy (and disbelief)	R9 (R7*)	7
39–57	Eurykleia repeats Od.'s presence (again)	R2	4
58–68	Penelope wishes it were true; asserts Od. is dead	R3–R5	5
69–79	Eurykleia repeats Od.'s presence, gives evidence, swears oath	R2, R8, R6	6
80–85a	Penelope expresses caution and determination to see	(R9)	(7)

But the impression of randomness, at least, is deceptive, and gives the lie (for example) to Irene de Jong's claim that the "conversation has no formalized structure".[13] In fact, the poet has generated two consecutive sequences of recognition, leading from the initial breaking of the news all the way to the acceptance or denial of its truth (as below):

[11] Sigla (Gainsford [2003: 42–44]), from the Recognition 'move' of the recognition sequence (the other three being Testing, Deception, Foretelling): (**R1**) the protagonist's appearance is enhanced by Athene, thus adding impact to his revelation (often involving a bath); (**R2**) the protagonist reveals him/herself; (**R3**) the addressee expresses disbelief; (**R4**): the addressee wishes it were true; (**R5**) the addressee asserts that Odysseus is dead; (**R6**) the protagonist is willing to swear an oath that Odysseus has returned; (**R7**) the addressee requests evidence; (**R8**) the protagonist gives evidence; (**R9**) joy and weeping at recognition.

[12] Sigla (Emlyn-Jones [1984: 6–7 (= [1998: 131–132])]): (**1**) Odysseus in disguise; (**2**) A conversation in which Odysseus is pressed for his identity, in reply to which he tells a false story in which he claims to have seen Odysseus on his travels and predicts his early return. The other speaker refers frequently in conversation to Odysseus, usually introducing the topic very shortly after him; (**3**) Odysseus tests the other's loyalty; the test is passed (or, in the case of the suitors and disloyal servants, failed); (**4**) Odysseus reveals himself; (**5**) The other refuses to believe; (**6**) Odysseus gives a sign (σῆμα) as a proof of identity; (**7**) Final recognition, accompanied by great emotion on both sides; (**8**) 'On to business'.

[13] de Jong (2001: 547).

A1	Eurykleia states Od.'s presence (4–9)
B1	Penelope denies it (10–24)
C1	Eurykleia offers proof (25–31)
D1	Penelope swoons/hesitates (32–33/34–38)
A2	Eurykleia states Od.'s presence (39–57)
B2	Penelope denies it (58–68)
C2	Eurykleia offers proof (69–79)
D2	Penelope non-committal (80–85)

Each of these sequences is begun (**A**) by a firm statement from Eurykleia of Odysseus' return (4–9 | 39–57), which is then followed (**B**) by an equally firm denial of its possibility from Penelope (10–24 | 58–68). To a response (**C**) in which Eurykleia offers proof of its truth (25–31 | 69–79), we see contrasting reactions (**D**): in the first sequence an initial swoon of joy (32–33) is followed by a question of disbelief ('how did he kill all the suitors?' 34–38: a source of wonderment to Odysseus himself when he was planning it at the start of Book 20 [38–43]), in the second Penelope has now become much more restrained after her initial unguarded (but swiftly qualified) reaction, and expresses simply her determination to go and see (80–85a).

In other words, we have two complete—but frustrated—recognition sequences, arranged one after the other in a doublet.[14] Note the dynamic use of this traditional structure, as the poet tempts his audience twice into thinking that the actual recognition is going to happen now, that is, away from Odysseus himself.[15] This dynamism, and the excitement and uncertainty it produces in the very moment of experiencing the narrative, is vitally important to a proper appreciation of the poet's artistry in this scene. We have become used to reading a very still *Odyssey*; but ancient audiences, or at least the really early ones who formed one side of the performance, would have experienced this and similar narratives orally, or more accurately aurally, in performance. For such a group, familiar with the stories as well their manner of telling, the poet's careful construction enlivens the unrolling of the narrative as it gets to where everyone knows it has to go: the happy reunion of husband and wife. However, at the start of Book 23 Homer seems to be about to end the

[14] Cf. Schadewaldt (1966: 13–14 [= (1970: 64–65)]); Besslich (1966: 88); Erbse (1972: 56); Hölscher (1989: 285–287); Katz (1991: 160–161); Schwinge (1993: 105–109); Danek (1998: 441–443).

[15] Katz (1991: 161–162) pairs this with the displacement, once again involving Eurykleia, of the foot-washing scene in Book 19; cf. also Schwinge (1993: 119–120).

recognition too soon, away from Odysseus, and so he carries his audience right to the brink of recognition only to draw back from completing the sequence at the last moment.

Aside from the inherent interest in creating and then diffusing narrative expectations, the fact of displacement puts great emphasis on *Penelope*'s role within the recognition process to be played out with Odysseus, and in several respects. Firstly, it is generally Odysseus who controls the moment and manner of his revelations on Ithaca: he chooses when to reveal himself to Eumaios and Philoitios in Book 21, to Telemakhos in Book 16 (with some prompting from Athene), and to Laertes in Book 24. Eurykleia's fondling of the scar (19.386–475) is a useful countercase, for once again here in Book 23 she is involved in pre-empting him (and we might remember similar anticipation of his disguise in Helen's story 4.242–251).[16] This reversal necessitates another, in that Penelope is unique in the *Odyssey*'s reception scenes in being brought to Odysseus (23.85–88 f.): usually Odysseus comes to others (taking Philoitios and Eumaios outside in Book 21, coming back into the hut to Telemakhos in Book 16, going to Laertes' orchard in Book 24, and returning to Penelope after his bath at 23.164–165). Whatever it may say of gender relationships in the poem, this certainly goes to show that our particular recognition scene is constructed—initially at least—from her viewpoint; it is, to use an exceedingly well-worn term,[17] focalised from Penelope's perspective.

So this introductory displacement gives the poet the opportunity to focus on Penelope's motivations and worries well before the decisive encounter.[18] Her individuality in these terms is furthered by the concomitant failure, for instance, of the typical token (invoked by Eurykeia at 23.73–77), which is elsewhere always directly offered and then accepted: Athene describes or reveals Ithaka to Odysseus (13.344–351); Odysseus explains Athene's wiles to Telemakhos, who seems at that point unwilling to credit his father's return (16.207–212); Eurykleia feels Odysseus' scar (19.392–475); Odysseus shows the scar to Philoitios and Eumaios (21.217–220) and Laertes (24.331–344).[19] The scar may have been seen

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[16] It is noticeable that female figures are frequently involved in this type of anticipation, presenting to my mind rather well the anxiety about female fidelity which the *nostos* pattern particularly poses; cf. Foley (1999: 115–157); Bonifazi (2009) on the pattern in general.

[17] For recent caution about the overuse of this term, cf. Nünlist (2002).

[18] Cf. van der Valk (1949: 252–253).

[19] Compare the way in which Odysseus as the stranger tries to provide a token in his description of Odysseus' clothes and companions (19.221–248); cf. de Jong (2001: 471).

by, exhibited to and accepted by Eurykleia and the rest of the household, but not yet by its mistress: she will not simply be presented with the report of tokens for her passively to accept.[20]

Her status is also reinforced by the doublet, for it throws great emphasis on the question of its successful fulfilment, as Penelope is presented progressively with well nigh every conceivable recognition element, and almost gives in at the end of the first sequence before checking her reaction. This heaping up of typical elements, which elsewhere do lead to recognition, stresses even more the fact that she is the one to reject their intimation at the final step of the second sequence.

2. *Penelope and Odysseus*

That Book 23 opens with a doublet recognition should, therefore, make it less of a surprise when I contend that the next part of the narrative—the actual recognition between Odysseus and Penelope—is also constructed as a doublet connected by the so-called 'digression' or 'interruption' (117–172). In this passage Odysseus turns aside from Penelope's stalled recognition, and introduces the rather pressing matter of the suitors' families, and the need to keep the slaughter secret from the rest of the community. He devises a fake wedding ceremony, which keeps random passers-by guessing at what is happening in the house, before having a bath to clean off the various bits of suitor still clinging to his tunic. Herein we find our first real textual difficulty, though it must be said that the doubts raised over the authenticity of this passage are entirely those of modern scholarship, for there is no sign either in the MS tradition or the scholia that anyone in antiquity suspected a large-scale interpolation in this passage. Though almost no two scholars can agree on the extent or parameters of the interruption,[21] there can be no doubt that to remove this passage would create a smoother narrative, a cleaner process of recognition. If, for instance, we were to remove 117–172 as a whole, as Wolfgang Schadewaldt *inter al.* would have us do,[22] then Odysseus'

[20] Studies of Penelope are legion: cf., e.g., Thornton (1970: 93–114); Katz (1991); Felson-Rubin (1996); Heitman (2005); cf. also Felson and Slatkin (2004).

[21] Heubeck (1992: 313–314).

[22] Schadewaldt (1966: 14–18 [= (1970: 65–69)]) following the path set by Kirchhoff (1879: 538–559, esp. 544ff.); Blass (1904: 222–225); Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1927: 70–71); von der Mühll (1940: 761); Focke (1943: 363–375 esp. 366–369); Page (1955: 114–115); also Merkelbach (1969: 97–99, 131–134). For the many and varied excisions (*inter al.* 96–176, 96–195, 111–176, 115–170, 117–170, 117–176) proposed by these

suggestion that Penelope's refusal to accept his identity is predicated on his current unwashed state (113–116) would be immediately addressed in the opening verses of her speech (174–176), leading straight into her test of Odysseus (177 and ff.), as follows:[23]

111 ὣς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
αἶψα δὲ Τηλέμαχον ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
Τηλέμαχ᾽, ἦ τοι μητέρ᾽ ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔασον
πειράζειν ἐμέθεν· τάχα δὲ φράσεται καὶ ἄρειον.
νῦν δ᾽ ὅττι ῥυπόω, κακὰ δὲ χροῒ εἵματα εἷμαι,
116 τοὔνεκ᾽ ἀτιμάζει με καὶ οὔ πώ φησι τὸν εἶναι.
173 τὸν δ᾽ αὖτε προσέειπε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια·
δαιμόνι᾽, οὐ γάρ τι μεγαλίζομαι οὐδ᾽ ἀθερίζω
175 οὐδὲ λίην ἄγαμαι, μάλα δ᾽ εὖ οἶδ᾽ οἷος ἔησθα
ἐξ Ἰθάκης ἐπὶ νηὸς ἰὼν δολιχηρέτμοιο.
ἀλλ᾽ ἄγε οἱ στόρεσον πυκινὸν λέχος, Εὐρύκλεια,
ἐκτὸς ἐϋσταθέος θαλάμου, τόν ῥ᾽ αὐτὸς ἐποίει·

But was Homer aiming at a 'cleaner' or 'leaner' text, and for that matter did his audience expect such a thing? Many scholars since Zenodotos have thought so, but our *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are anything but neat, as both Siegfried Besslich and Bernard Fenik amply showed in their defences of this passage,[24] pointing out that interruptions to the main line of the narrative are very common in Homeric epic. This unevenness, if we want to

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scholars, cf. esp. Erbse (1972: 55–56 nn. 1–2); Heubeck (1974: 128–129 [and 87–109 on Analytical treatments of the *Odyssey* more generally]); Fenik (1974: 64–65); Heubeck (1992: 313–314). The lack of agreement is, as Schadewaldt (1966: 11 [= (1970: 63)]) points out, "für die analytische Lösung einigermaßen kompromittierend". I concentrate on his excision (also that of Wilamowitz and Focke) because Schadewaldt's treatment is widely, if to my mind a little puzzlingly, regarded as the most important; cf. Heubeck (1974: 128).

[23] This reduced text is not without its problems, of course: Blass (1904: 224), for instance, noted that it would leave Odysseus still splattered in blood and gore when he goes to bed with Penelope ("das ist doch monströs, wirklich raubtiermäßig"); similarly Hölscher (1989: 289–291, esp. 291): "man denke sich: nach zwanzigjähriger Trennung, einem trojanischen Krieg und einer ganzen Odyssee von Irrfahrten als Bettler heimkehrend, besudelt jetzt mit dem Mortblud von hundert Freiern—und kein Bad?"; cf. also Besslich (1966: 85–87); Erbse (1972: 59–60); Eisenberger (1973: 306–307).

[24] Besslich (1966: 83–96) on this scene, 97–119 on other examples of the 'Einschub' or 'Zwischenstück'; Fenik (1974: 64–69); also Danek (1998: 444). The other chief responses to the Analytical approach on this passage may be found in the work of Erbse (1972), Eisenberger (1973) and Hölscher (1989: esp. 288f [see above, n. 5]). For further points, cf. van der Valk (1949: 253 n. 2): "the side-action in ψ is not inconvenient, but aptly divides the scene into two parts"; Marks (2008: esp. 93–94) suggests that another purpose of the passage is to 'de-authorize' other versions of Odysseus' story, by suggesting and then denying the possibility of Odysseus' exile, but that seems to me an over-reading of 117–120; cf. also Heubeck (1992: 313–314).

term it that, directly reflects the poet's technique and its origins in the context of performance, where it is not so much a question of *what* happens in the narrative (for the audience already knows that) but *how* that narrative happens. Misdirection, prolepsis, analepsis, false starts, premature ends, even when the results seem to us awkward—these are the stock in trade for those dealing with such an informed performative dynamic.

First, however, let us not neglect the 'interruption's' most obvious connections with its surrounding narrative. I set out below a scheme of the entire scene:

			Gainsford[25]	Emlyn-Jones[26]
A	***1–85a***	***Displaced recognition sequence(s) (failed)***		
	4–9	Eurykleia reveals (~ foretells) Od.'s presence	R2	4
	10–24	Penelope denies its truth	R3, R5	5
	25–31	Eurykleia repeats Od.'s presence, and gives evidence	R2, R8	6
	32–38	Penelope swoons in joy (and disbelief)	R9 (R7*)	7
	39–57	Eurykleia repeats Od.'s presence (again)	R2	4
	58–68	Penelope wishes it were true; asserts Od. is dead	R3–R5	5
	69–79	Eurykleia repeats Od.'s presence; gives evidence, swears oath	R2, R8, R6	6
	80–85a	Penelope expresses caution and determination to see	(R9)	(7)
B	***85b–110***	***First recognition sequence (failed)***		
	85b–95	Penelope hesitant, wondering whether to accept or test	T2	5 (6)
	96–103	Telemakhos rebukes Penelope for not recognising Od.	R2	(6)
	104–110	Penelope deflects his abuse, heralding the test	T2	5 (6)
C	***111–163***	***'Interruption'***		
	111–116	Odysseus deflects the test	T2	(6)
	117–122	Odysseus introduces their difficulties	8	
	123–128	Telemakhos defers to his father	8	
	129–140	Odysseus gives instructions	8	
	141–152	instructions are carried out	8	
	153–163	Odysseus has a bath (⟨ *Hospitality sequence*)		

[25] For the **R**- prefixed sigla in Gainsford's scheme, see above, n. 11. The relevant **T**-prefixed sigla (from the Testing 'move') are: (**T2**) the protagonist decides to test the addressee; (**T3**) the protagonist questions the addressee with a view to testing him/her; (**T4**) the relationship is shown to be intact, or the loyalty of the addressee is revealed.

[26] For sigla, see above, n. 12.

D	*164–204*	***Second recognition sequence (successful)***	**Gainsford**	**Emlyn-Jones**
	164–172	Odysseus rebukes Penelope for not recognising him	R2	(6)
	173–180	Penelope deflects his abuse, gives the test	T3	(6)
	181–204	Odysseus explodes, passing the test	T4	(7)
	205–206 (and ff.)	Penelope swoons, recognising Odysseus	R9 (and etc.)	7

Following the first doublet (**A** 1–85a, examined above), and sandwiched between two combined sequences of Testing and Recognition (**B** 85b–110 and **D** 164–204f.), the interruption (**C**) is in fact introduced with Odysseus' opening instruction to his son to let his mother be (111–116), in terms which herald at least the need for him to have the bath which closes the 'interruption' (153–163). Bathing is in itself typical in recognition sequences, where other elements from the hospitality sequence can often intrude, as Marilyn Katz has shown,[27] and the poet explicitly prepares for it by having Odysseus ascribe the failure of the recognition sequence to the lack of a bath (115–116 νῦν δ' ὅττι ῥυπόω, κακὰ δὲ χροῒ εἵματα εἷμαι, / τοὔνεκ' ἀτιμάζει με καὶ οὔ πώ φησι τὸν εἶναι), which strikes me rather powerfully as something approaching a metapoetic comment on the narrative. Furthermore, as J.M. Foley reminds us, these actions are always elsewhere associated with a feast,[28] thus allowing us to see the traditional linkage between his bath and the preceding preparation and description of the false wedding feast (129–152). Moreover, the trip to the fields and subsequent battle foreshadowed here (137–140) is eventually carried out (23.347 and ff.), though the apparently dubious status of the end of the *Odyssey* itself would suggest (as several scholars have argued) that we simply remove both the interruption and the 'continuation', as Denys Page famously called the rest of the poem after 23.296.[29] But such cavalier violence is neither necessary nor warranted, particularly when we see (as we shall in a moment) the typical function of such passages in the recognition sequence.

In terms of its structural progression, the recognition pattern in this section of the *Odyssey* is realised in two sequences of three speeches each,

[27] Katz (1991: 174–175).

[28] Foley (1999: 244–245).

[29] Page (1955: 101–136), following, e.g., Kirchhoff (1879: 557–558); cf. Kelly (2007a) for recent discussion and bibliography. It is no coincidence that most of those who damn the 'interruption' are also in the lists against the 'continuation'; see above, n. 22 and Erbse (1972: 67 n. 22), Hölscher (1989: 289–290); Danek (1998: 445–446).

in which (**B**) Penelope is rebuked by a member of the house for failing to recognise Odysseus, then (**C**) she deflects the rebuke and heralds or uses a *sêma* or testing point, before (**D**) Odysseus reacts to that *sêma*. Initiated (**A**) by one member of the marital pair sitting down 'facing' the other (88–90 | 164–165a), this scheme may be represented as below:

A1 Penelope takes position before Odysseus (88–95)	**A2** Odysseus takes position before Penelope (164–165a)
B1 Telemakhos rebukes Penelope (96–103) – 100–102 = 168–170 – 103 ~ 172	**B2** Odysseus rebukes Penelope (165b–172) – 168–170 = 100–102 – 172 ~ 103
C1 Penelope deflects rebuke; heralds a *sêma* (104–110) – 104 = 173	**C2** Penelope deflects rebuke; prompts *sêma* (173–181) – 173 = 104
D1 Odysseus accepts the postponed *sêma* (111–116)	**D2** Odysseus denies the *sêma* (182–204)

The several phraseological parallels between the sections make the doublet's progression relatively clear, and the whole structure places great stress on the delayed *sêma* introduced by Penelope at **C1** and acknowledged by Odysseus at **D1**; its emphasis is increased by the fact that Odysseus is completely deceived at **D2**, as opposed to his rather smug grin at **D1**, and he explodes with an anger which contrasts quite markedly with the self-control and foresight he displayed at **D1** and in his following speech.

We also note, once more, Penelope's prominence within this progression. Aside from the fact that she now resumes the usual place within such scenes at the start of the second sequence (so that Odysseus comes to her, and not *vice versa* as at the start of the first sequence), neither her son nor her husband can shame her out of her caution (**B1** and **B2**). Whilst it is usually Odysseus who confirms his identity to his interlocutor, deploying the formula ἤλυθον εἰκοστῶι ἔτει ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν (16.206 (Telemakhos), 19.484 (Eurykleia), 21.208 (Eumaios and Philoitios), 24.322 (Laertes)), the only reflex of that expression here in Book 23 comes in the repeated verses at **B1** and **B2** (101–102 = 169–170 ὅς οἱ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας | ἔλθοι ἐεικοστῶι ἔτει ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν), where the expression marks out the failure of this (usually self-)identification to convince Penelope.[30] Furthermore, she is the one who determines when and where

[30] Katz (1991: 176); Eisenberger (1973: 309–310); Schwinge (1993: 115–116); *contra* Kirchhoff (1879: 555): "eine blosse, nichts Neues hinzufügende Wiederholung".

the *sêma* (also of her choosing, as Odysseus seems to concede, at 113–114, Τηλέμαχ', ἦ τοι μητέρ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔασον | πειράζειν ἐμέθεν· τάχα δὲ φράσεται καὶ ἄρειον) is to be deployed.[31] In other scenes, as we saw above, Odysseus is generally the one who possesses and controls the token: only Penelope here in Book 23 deploys a false *sêma* at the moment of recognition, and she does so by picking up on her husband's instructions to Eurykleia to prepare a bed for him 171–172. In all these ways, her uniqueness, her agency is underlined.[32]

Any operation to remove 117–172 (or any part therein) would cut right across this carefully constructed structure.[33] Its second sequence (164–204 ff.) actually requires Odysseus (or Penelope) to be physically removed from the scene so that he can take his place 'facing his wife' (**A2**). It also requires something to have changed from the first sequence, where Odysseus was simply content to let matters lie until Penelope decided that he was who he said he was.[34] Here he barely sits down before launching into a rebuke. It may seem as though his change of attitude is too swift,[35] but its motivation is in fact the substance of the 'interruption': the bathing, which is elsewhere so handy a means for revealing the hero's true beauty and power (as Telemakhos in Book 3, Odysseus in Book 6, even Laertes in Book 24; cf. Eurykleia in Book 19), has failed to work its magic on Penelope, as Odysseus had predicted it would (115–116 above).[36] His earlier explanation for her failure to recognise him was off the mark, and he is not particularly happy about it.[37]

[31] Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1927: 69) well interprets her delay: "[w]enn sie so redet, hat sie diese Dinge bereits bedacht, und wir werden nicht zweifeln, daß sie vor hat, von dieser entscheidenden Prüfung Gebrauch zu machen"; somewhat differently, Schwinge (1993: 111–114) suggests a reactive and almost knowing co-operation between Odysseus and his wife.

[32] Hölscher (1939: 74) (cf. also id. [1989: 290–291]): "Penelope hat hier durchaus den Charakter des Odysseus bekommen, sie ist die Vorsichtige, Misstrauische, Listenreiche. Man kann daraus sehen, daß alles um der Szene und der Handlung willen geschieht, die Charaktere sich zuweilen ihr fügen müssen. Der Typ der Szene hat sich aus dem Charakter des Odysseus entwickelt, gibt aber diesen Charakter jetzt an Penelope weiter".

[33] Eisenberger (1973: 310).

[34] Focke (1943: 366) feels that at this point the conversation "steht … auf des Messers Schneide", but Erbse (1972: 66) seems closer to the mark: "sondern ist es festgelegt".

[35] So, e.g., Kirchhoff (1879: 555); Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1927: 70–71); *contra* Erbse (1972: 68–69).

[36] Similarly, Erbse (1972: 59) argues from the intimacy of 23.175–176 (μάλα δ' εὖ οἶδ' οἷος ἔησθα | ἐξ Ἰθάκης ἐπὶ νηὸς ἰὼν δολιχηρέτμοιο) that "irgendetwas muß noch geschehen" from her initial scepticism; cf. also Schwinge (1993: 116–117).

[37] Heitman (2005: 88) may be right to find his expectation 'condescending'.

One could say that this only really argues for the authenticity or integrity of the bathing material at 111–116 and 153–163, leaving the rest of the exchange with Telemakhos and the fulfilment of his father's instructions out of account. However, this part of the passage expresses Odysseus' authority within the household, and so is an important thematic precursor to the attempt to reassert his authority over his wife.[38] Notice, first, the acquiescent attitude of Telemakhos in their exchange,[39] the son's readiness to defer automatically to his father, in contrast to earlier disagreements over strategy in Book 16, when he had first questioned Odysseus' intention to fight the suitors alone (241–244), and then his plan to go around the landholdings making trial of his retainers (311–320). Here in Book 23, by contrast, Odysseus has proven himself to his son, their alignment being evident also in the way that the father in **B2** now takes on the rebuking role of the son from **B1**. But now Odysseus has to prove himself to his wife, which is an altogether different matter.

This is underlined by the fact that not only does Telemakhos clearly accept the fact of Odysseus' identity (πάτερ φίλε 124), but everyone else does as well: witness the alacrity with which his instructions are carried out by the servants (ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα τοῦ μάλα μὲν κλύον ἠδ' ἐπίθοντο 141), and the success of his ruse to conceal the death of the suitors with the sounds of a wedding (133–136 ⟩ 143–152). So the 'interruption' between the two sequences of the doublet confirms Odysseus' resumption of power in his household,[40] over his son and servants—but not yet his wife. What builds up in this passage, therefore, is an abundance of evidence which should be enough, in Odysseus' eyes, to persuade Penelope of something which everyone else has already accepted.

These thematic advantages are crucially bolstered by the realisation that the substance of the 'interruption'—planning for the future—is a

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[38] Cf. Besslich (1966: 90); Boni (1966: 168): "ma, oltre a preparare esternamente l'azione, sono realmente l'annuncio dell nuove nozze di Penelope e Odísseo, la conclusione della gara dell'arco, in cui Odísseo è entrato in lizza come mendico per uscirne eroe e sposo"; similarly optimistic (too much so? cf. Segal [1996: 219]) is the view of Thornton (1970: 104), that the passage changes the "mood and atmosphere from battle and slaughter to the happiness of Odysseus and Penelope at last reunited"; cf. also Besslich (1966: 89–91); Hölscher (1989: 293); Danek (1998: 448).

[39] Erbse (1972: 66).

[40] Erbse (1972: 66): "jetzt erhält er Gelegenheit, vor Penelope als Hausherr zu schalten, seine unübertreffliche Klugheit vorzuweisen, und 'sein Wesen zu aktualisieren'" (the quote from Besslich [1966: 89]); cf. also Besslich (1966: 88–89); Eisenberger (1973: 308–309); Schwinge (1993: 113–114).

repeated element in the recognition sequence. I have left this argument until now because I wanted to be able to examine the substance of the passage without recourse to typicality, not because the two types of analysis are mutually exclusive, but because the poet expresses himself through typicality. That is, repetition in itself is never a sufficient explanation for any textual phenomenon: both the poets and their audiences expected something individual to be done with traditional resources, and so we have to ask what the typical element is trying to express in a given situation. So, once more, an oralist analysis helps bolster what one might think of as a more 'literary' interpretation.

Just to begin with the simple fact of typicality, we could compare for instance the post-revelation conversations to a similarly practical end between Athene and Odysseus in Book 13 (361–439), Telemakhos and Odysseus in Book 16 (221–321), Eumaios, Philoitios and Odysseus in Book 21 (227–244), and even between Odysseus and Laertes in Book 24 (356–361). These strategy sessions lead the audience forward into the next action or series of actions, binding the current recognition with the future narrative that is thereby enabled. These are, of course, all successful sequences, and both recognisor and recognisee immediately join forces in implementing the strategy. But here in Book 23 recognition has not yet taken place, and so Odysseus excludes Penelope from his strategising. Yet this uniqueness, once more, throws great emphasis on her refusal to recognise her husband, and adds to the several indications that she is exercising an unusual influence over the success and direction of the narrative.

In effect, the poet has completed his recognition sequence without achieving recognition, so that the 'interruption' itself, and its exclusion of Penelope from the process, is a vital signal of that failure. It will take another restarted sequence, with another unusual version of the *sêma* element deployed by Penelope, before recognition is complete. That second sequence is unravelled in close combination with the first, and, as it proceeds, the audience look forward (and not just from the mere fact that recognition *always* happens in a relatively established way)[41] to the parallel developments within the sequences—repetition of rebuke,

[41] Hence it is a misguided question to wonder when, precisely, Penelope recognises her husband (and I waste no time here on the 'early recognition' theory; cf. Emlyn-Jones (1984) = (1998) for its demolition). That the poet does not complete the sequences, either before Eurykleia or Odysseus himself, is sufficient indication that the recognition both in performance and in her mind is not finished. When the pattern is concluded, the process is complete, and only then does Penelope *know* that her husband has returned.

deflecting of the rebuke and so on. Indeed, it only now becomes apparent that we drew the earlier scheme too narrowly: we should instead see the 'interruption' in a parallel dialogic structure with the rest of the narrative of Book 23, as follows:

A1	Penelope takes position before Odysseus (88–95)	**A2**	Odysseus takes position before Penelope (164–165a)
B1	Telemakhos rebukes Penelope (96–103) – 100–102 = 168–170 (A2) – 103 ~ 172	**B2**	Odysseus rebukes Penelope (165b–172) – 168–170 = 100–102 (A1) – 172 ~ 103
C1	Penelope deflects rebuke; heralds a *sêma* (104–110) – 104 = 173 (B2)	**C2**	Penelope deflects rebuke; prompts *sêma* (173–181) – 173 = 104 (B1)
D1	Odysseus accepts the postponed *sêma* (111–116)	**D2**	Odysseus denies the *sêma* (182–204)
[**E1**	Recognition]	**E2**	Recognition (205–246)
F1	Discussion / Practicalities (and bath) (117–163)	**F2**	Discussion / Practicalities (lovemaking) (247–372)

After the actual moment of recognition (**E2**) fulfilling or responding to the postponed moment at the end of the first sequence (**E1**), the poet now returns once more to the matters at hand, with a lengthy exchange between husband and wife on Odysseus' future travels (247–288), the end of the false celebrations Odysseus had earlier set up (289–299) and the reciprocities between husband and wife (300–343) before Athene leads the men out to face the suitors (344–372). These post-recognition actions (**F2**) mirror the concerns and complete the actions of the 'interruption' (**F1**): Odysseus' bath (**F1**) and the reunited pair's lovemaking (**F2**), for instance, are intensely domestic activities, not least because the hostess normally has at least some role in arranging or conducting the bathing, and they signal the affirmation of the hero's place within his home.[42]

Moreover, these parallel **F** passages, both of which open with an instruction speech from Odysseus (117–122/247–255) about his future toils, also bring the narrative further towards the final confrontation: (**F1**) Telemakhos accedes to his father's greater wisdom and carries out his instructions to confute the suitors' families' knowledge of what has happened (123–152); (**F2**) when Penelope has been summarily placed

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As Hölscher (1989: 287) remarks, with characteristic insight, "[d]as Verhalten epischer Personen ist nicht zuerst auf das psychologische Wahrscheinliche berechnet, sondern auf den erzählerischen Hergang".

[42] On the symbolism of the bath, cf. Müller (1966: 146–148); Hölscher (1989: 291–293).

back into the female quarters (354–365) for the same reason, Telemakhos joins his father (and Eumaios and Philoitios) in gathering their resources against the suitors' families (366–372). So, in both passages, Odysseus gives an order to his family and/or retainers about the coming troubles, which is then carried out (cf. 141 ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα τοῦ μάλα μὲν κλύον ἠδ' ἐπίθοντο ~ 369 οἱ δέ οἱ οὐκ ἀπίθησαν). This complex of reasons and interconnections, thematic and structural, demonstrates from an oralist perspective the integrity and purpose—indeed, necessity—of the passage formerly known as the 'interruption' within the larger sequence of recognition between Penelope and Odysseus.

However, an argument for authenticity in these terms is merely an ancillary benefit to an oralist analysis of this portion of the *Odyssey*'s narrative. For we have seen that the theme of recognition actually structures the entirety of Book 23, from the first two sequences between Eurykleia and Penelope (1–85a), to this second doublet between Penelope and Odysseus (85b–372), making up the longest and most complex such example of recognition in Homeric poetry. The pairing of these sequences is not simply an enjoyable exercise in diagram drawing, but a method of tracing, predicting and guiding the audience's response; just as the first pair uses a doublet structure to throw emphasis on Penelope's agency and caution, so the second enormously expands on, in fact puts into effect, the qualities she had shown in the first sequence.[43] The emphasised sequence set in this pair is the larger, as usual in Homeric poetry, and the audience is encouraged to experience that process of recognition through the prism, or with the preparation, of the smaller, earlier one.[44] Typical and repeated patterns of composition, in short, have thematic significance, and are not simply the unconscious operation of a traditional monolith on an unthinking poet.

Conclusion

What I have tried to demonstrate in this paper is the reason why an increasing number of Homerists, particularly in the United Kingdom and Europe, are wrong to doubt the usefulness and interrelatedness of oral performance and oral composition in Archaic epic poetry. Orality makes a tremendous difference to the way we read Homer, and decidedly *not*

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[43] Cf. Schadewaldt (1966: 13–14 [= (1970: 64–65)]).
[44] On such increasing doublets, cf. Kelly (2007a: 374–381).

as a background or inheritance which the master poet has transcended. An oralist perspective leads us to look for the structures underlying the narrative, the language of the poet in its broadest sense, to give us thereby something approaching the knowledge and experience of an original audience. When we are sensitive to the poet's building blocks, we can observe him building up his audience's expectations through the manipulation of his inherited material, and doing so in a dynamic process which unfolds meaning as the narrative progresses. We can also essay informed judgements about the integrity or status of suspected passages, principally because we are not looking for the smoothest version of the narrative, but one which was designed to be (re)generated within an aesthetic of performance. This situation, whether real or ideal, demands a particular type of control from the poet composing before an audience who knew that Penelope would be reunited with her husband, but were looking towards the individual manner in which this particular version of that tale would achieve that end.

To sum up: connected closely with a chiastic sequence at the end of Book 22 detailing Odysseus' recognition by his slave women, which introduces the focus on Penelope's agency, the narrative of Book 23 begins with a displaced recognition between Eurykleia and Penelope, constructed in a doublet which throws great emphasis on Penelope's views and perspective. The immediately following actual recognition between husband and wife is also constructed in a doublet, which once more privileges Penelope's role in the process and, like the first sequences, requires two almost complete runs of recognition motifs before Penelope makes her decision. This time, however, in keeping with their greater importance and complexity, the two sequences are joined by an entirely typical passage which concludes the first sequence, underlines its failure, renews the emphasis on Penelope as agent, and looks forward to the series of actions required to confirm that recognition in the rest of Book 23, which serves as the true corresponding element in the second sequence of that major set. Hardly justifying Denys Page's condemnation as "the most inartistic of all the interpolations in the *Odyssey*",[45] it thereby helps to motivate and explain the narrative developments from one sequence to the other, to achieve the juncture between the two sequences (not to mention the two characters) and to draw the recognition into its place within the continuation of the story, and the end of the poem.

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[45] Page (1955: 114).

In Book 23 of the *Odyssey*, Homer has created a memorable, very long and very complex series of recognitions as the climax to his primary story.[46] It is the most important of several such scenes in the poem, and he lavishes everything on it. The consequent challenge it presents to its audience(s) is well captured by Hartmut Erbse: "diese ganze, vom Hörer des Epos seit langem mit Spannung erwartete Szene hat einen gewundenen, nicht in allen ihren Kehren leicht verständlichen Verlauf".[47] If we ignore the dynamic between composition and performance in the evolution of the technique behind this sequence, and simply *read* the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we would almost any other ancient narrative text, then the scene's intricacies become obstacles, and almost none of the text's richness is visible or, should I say, audible. We, the poet, and his works, would be much the poorer for it.

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[46] Hölscher (1989: 285).
[47] Erbse (1972: 58).

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THE PRESENTATION OF SONG IN HOMER'S *ODYSSEY*[*]

Deborah Beck

Abstract

This paper will argue that the main narrator of the *Odyssey* represents speech by bards differently from speech by any other kind of character, thereby marking their speech as fundamentally distinctive. No professional poet character is directly quoted both speaking in normal conversation and also singing a poem. Phemius is quoted directly when speaking to Odysseus (22.344–353), but never when singing (for example, 1.154–155, 1.325–327, both represented in indirect speech). Conversely, Demodocus is never quoted directly except within his second song (8.266–366). At one level, this maintains the consistent separation in the *Odyssey* between first-person speech or narrative and poetry (Beck 2005).

Demodocus' songs, furthermore, particularly the first two, have several features that are unusual for speech uttered by non-poet characters. The first two songs use mainly ὥς clauses to introduce indirect speech, whereas by far the most usual pattern is to use infinitives (Kelly 2008); the second song is represented primarily in free indirect speech. Both phenomena make the speech being represented especially vivid and detailed. Scholars have noticed that the second song seems to identify the voice of Demodocus with the voice of the main narrator (for example, de Jong 2001), but surprisingly, few have considered what the effect of this might be (Edwards 1987 is an exception). Moreover, no one has identified this phenomenon as free indirect speech. In fact, Demodocus' second song is the longest example of free indirect speech in Homeric epic. Poets not only say different things from other characters, but they say them differently.

This paper looks in detail at how song is presented in the *Odyssey*. First, it gives overviews of relevant scholarship, both about speech presentation techniques that appear in songs and about song in Homeric poetry. Then it describes the overall patterns for speech presentation in song, noting the striking differences between these patterns and those for any other kind of speech in the Homeric poems. Finally, it analyzes speech presentation in the three songs of Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8, showing that each mode of speech presentation has a complementary role to play in depicting these songs. Each speech presentation technique as it is used in song

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is not only consistent with the usual functions of that particular technique but creates unique effects in these songs. Direct quotation, used only in Demodocus' second song about the adulterous affair of Ares and Aphrodite, presents features of speech that are inextricably linked to conversational exchange; speech mention gives a kind of overview or title of the song, or presents speech within a given song where exchange of information rather than the content of the information is the critical point; indirect speech presents what might be considered the main speech act of the song; and free indirect speech presents a wide range of expressive features that flesh out the songs into unique speech acts where the idea of 'narrator' is simultaneously very important and extremely ambiguous.

This section begins with an overview of the four major techniques of speech presentation in Homeric epic. One of these, free indirect speech, is not currently believed to exist in Homeric poetry but, as I will show, it plays a regular and important role in depicting songs in the *Odyssey*, not only Demodocus' songs that are the focus of the last part of the paper, but also songs by Phemius presented in *Odyssey* 1. Widely recognized modes of speech presentation in Homeric epic include direct quotation, indirect speech, and speech mention.[1] One critical distinction between direct quotation and indirect speech is whether the speech's deictic expressions, like pronouns and temporal words, take the perspective of the speaker or the reporter.[2] In direct quotation, the point of reference within the speech is the speaker rather than the reporter of the speech, insofar as deictic words in the speech refer back to the speaker. For instance, in the sentence 'Joe said, "I am not feeling well"', the pronoun 'I' refers to Joe and not to whoever is telling us that Joe said this. In contrast, an indirect speech version[3] of the same utterance might say, 'Joe said that he was not feeling well', where the third person pronoun refers to Joe from the perspective of the reporting voice and not from Joe's own point of view. Similarly, in direct quotation, the time in the speech is presented from Joe's perspective, and so the tense of the main verb in Joe's speech is in the

[1] de Jong (2004b: 114–115) gives a brief overview of speech presentation techniques most frequently found in Homeric poetry.

[2] Banfield (1982: 25) lists differences between direct and indirect speech. Coulmas (1986) is a useful discussion of issues of deixis in direct and indirect speech, primarily from a linguistic point of view; 2–3 provides a very brief but useful overview, while 14–19 discusses issues of tense and temporal deixis in somewhat more detail.

[3] This should in no way be taken to imply that indirect speech is a derivative of direct speech, or vice versa: Banfield (1982: 25-37) demonstrates that neither can be derived from the other.

present tense even though the reporting speaker is telling us what Joe said after the fact. On the other hand, in indirect speech, where the time of the speech is assimilated to the perspective of the reporting voice, the main verb in Joe's speech is in the past tense. Speech mention, like 'Joe gave Al a message', does not contain any kind of subordinate clause presenting the reported speech act, and so it lacks the kind of deictic words that appear in both direct quotation and indirect speech.

Speech mention does not generally figure in linguistically-oriented discussions of speech presentation, which focus primarily on comparing and contrasting direct with indirect speech. The speech presentational spectrum approach, devised by narratological scholars, describes additional options for speech presentation besides direct quotation and indirect speech, such as speech mention.[4] What generally governs this approach to studying speech presentation is the extent to which a particular mode of presentation gives the reader or audience the impression that it has captured the wording of what the quoted speaker said.[5] Hence, speech mention like 'Joe gave Al a message' presents speech as an action, where the wording is not given, whereas, at the other end of the spectrum, direct quotation gives at least the illusion that it has provided the 'original' speech of the person talking.

Songs in the *Odyssey* include all these modes of speech presentation. In addition to indirect speech and speech mention, songs also have a mode of speech presentation that is generally believed not to exist in Homeric poetry,[6] namely free indirect speech. Free indirect speech has characteristics of both direct quotation and indirect quotation, resulting in a sense for an audience that two voices—the quoted speaker and the reporting narrator—are blended. The following quotation from Jane Austen's

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[4] de Jong (2004b: 114) calls it 'speech-act mention'. Genette (1980: 170-173), a fundamental treatment of speech presentation, puts forward a speech presentation spectrum that contains three modes of speech presentation, like those of de Jong (2004b) but with quite different names attached. Other scholars, however, have advocated something more like a spectrum, with several different speech presentation modes in addition to these three. For this approach see especially Fludernik (1993); McHale (1978) remains influential; Rimmon-Kenan (2002: 110-111) (largely following McHale) provides a useful and accessible overview.

[5] An important body of recent work has debunked the idea that direct quotation *in fact* captures the 'actual' words of a quoted speaker, even where there are any actual words to be quoted. See e.g. Sternberg (1982); Fludernik (1993: 30 and 74); Collins (2001: 49-58).

[6] Banfield (1982: 228-230); de Jong (2004b: 269 n.41) considers presentation techniques other than direct quotation, indirect speech, and speech mention 'irrelevant' for Homeric speech presentation.

Emma gives a sense of how modern narrative fiction uses extended passages of free indirect speech to present the thoughts of a character, here Mrs. Elton. This passage immediately follows a direct quotation of Mrs. Elton's reply to an invitation.

> No invitation came amiss to her. Her Bath habits made evening-parties perfectly natural to her, and Maple Grove had given her a taste for dinners. She was a little shocked at the want of two drawing rooms, at the poor attempt at rout-cakes, and there being no ice in the Highbury card parties. Mrs. Bates, Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Goddard and others, were a good deal behind hand in knowledge of the world, but *she* would soon shew them how every thing ought to be arranged. In the course of the spring she must return their civilities by one very superior party—in which her card tables should be set out with their separate candles and unbroken packs in the true style—and more waiters engaged for the evening than their own establishment could furnish, to carry round the refreshments at exactly the proper hour, and in the proper order. (Vol. 3, Ch. XVI)

An influential treatment of free indirect speech (McHale [1978]) tells us that it is presented without the syntactical subordination of a reporting verb that characterizes indirect speech (as seen in the passage above); it uses the tense- and pronoun-shifting of indirect speech (here 'she' and 'was' at the end of the second line rather than Mrs. Elton's own 'I am'); it retains the quoted speaker's perspective for deictics such as 'now', as in direct speech; and it uses some expressive and stylistic features that are not permissible in indirect speech, such as vocatives, exclamations, and word choice (here the clue that the passage is free indirect speech rather than the narrator making fun of Mrs. Elton is the italicized *she* halfway through).

In contrast to McHale's list of criteria that identify free indirect speech, recent work has argued that no single feature characterizes it. Collins (2001: 133–135), after arguing that the two necessary criteria are the lack of a quoting verb and the orientation of some deictic elements (such as temporal adverbs) to the perspective of the reported speaker, says that 'the chief diagnostic [of whether free indirect speech is present] is not any formal feature but the very fact of a heteroglossic source' (134). Similarly, Laird (1999: 99) declares at the end of a discussion of free indirect speech in Vergil's *Aeneid* that 'there is no infallible criterion for identifying the presentation of discourse … The interpretation of ambiguous instances can depend on our interpretation of surrounding passages, and sometimes even of the entire works in which they appear'.

This leads us to an important aspect of recent work on free indirect speech, the growing body of evidence that it was not invented for, nor is

it particularly characteristic of, modern literary fiction. Laird (1999) discusses examples of free indirect speech in various Latin texts besides the *Aeneid*. Fludernik's exhaustive study of free indirect speech 'insist[s] on the pervasiveness of "non-standard" free indirect discourse, whether in non-literary, non-third person, non-past tense or non-Modernist texts, and will emphasize the existence of free indirect speech in the oral language' (1993: 73). Fludernik finds examples of free indirect speech in—among others—Chaucer, Shakespeare, and medieval French (93–99), noting that in these pre-modern texts, free indirect speech tends to be used more for speech than for thought presentation and is often found as 'fairly unobtrusive continuations of indirect discourse'.[7] Similarly, Collins notes that 'free indirect speech (FIS) in the European languages has frequently been treated—and continues to be so, even in the face of abundant counter-examples—as a primarily or exclusively literary phenomenon of post-medieval origin' (2001: 133) before going on to discuss how it functions in the medieval Russian court records on which his study focuses. Thus, although various scholars have pointed out that free indirect speech is neither a modern nor a literary phenomenon, this idea has not yet gained wide acceptance.

In comparison to these scholars, it is instructive to quote from de Jong (2004a) on the songs of Demodocus in *Odyssey* 8, the most extensive examples of free indirect speech in the Homeric epics. De Jong describes free indirect speech without either seeming to realize that she has done so or attaching any great significance to the fact. 'Strictly speaking, he [Demodocus] is not a secondary narrator, since his songs are quoted in indirect rather than direct speech …, which after a few lines becomes an independent construction. In this way the voices of primary and secondary narrator merge' (21–22). This is essentially de Jong's entire comment on speech presentation in Demodocus' songs, either here or in her narratological commentary on the *Odyssey* (2001).[8] Were it not that

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[7] See especially 95, a reference to Elizabethan prose in particular.

[8] E.g., her overview of the second song of Demodocus (206–208) notes that it contains direct quotations, but says nothing further about them. Another approach common to free indirect speech has been to characterize it as direct quotation. Garvie (1994) 295 says, 'we slip from indirect … to direct discourse'; Richardson (1990: 85) says of the first song of Demodocus, 'it seems that the narrator has not made up his mind whether the song is rendered in direct discourse or not' and 'the temptation to mistake [the third song] for direct quotation is unavoidable'. The editions of van Thiel use quotation marks for free indirect speech at *Il.* 9.685–687 and *Od.* 1.40–41. None of these passages is direct discourse, since each fails in many key respects to follow the usual patterns that characterize direct quotation.

de Jong is such a well regarded scholar of narratology, this formulation would be justly considered naïve, whereas it in fact indicates the degree to which everyone working on Homeric narrative assumes that free indirect speech is not present there.

This quotation from de Jong is characteristic of Homeric scholarship on poetry and song, which generally does not take speech presentation as a central focus.[9] Important studies of song in the *Odyssey* tend to offer thematic analyses of what the depiction of song means for our understanding of the *Odyssey* overall,[10] or for our understanding of the *Odyssey*'s own genre and performance.[11] Various treatments have considered individual songs of Demodocus to try to figure out their function in the larger *Odyssey* narrative.[12] Occasional studies of other aspects of Homeric poetry have touched on speech presentation in passing while mainly talking about something else.[13] A study of song in the *Odyssey* that firstly focuses on speech presentation and secondly discusses the possible presence of free indirect speech is an important desideratum.

Alongside the terminology for speech presentation that I have been discussing, my discussion of direct quotations in the second song of Demodocus relies on ideas developed by linguists for understanding conversational exchange. These include, on the one hand, the major categories of speech act theory, which classify a given speech based on what the speech is about: an assertive states a fact on the speaker's authority ('the cat is on the mat'); a question invites the addressee to take a position about a fact ('is the cat on the mat?'); a directive tries to get the addressee to do something that the speaker wants done ('put the cat on the mat'); and an emotive states the speaker's feeling about facts that are assumed or implied, but not explicitly stated ('I wish the cat were on the mat!', where the utterance's main point is the speaker's

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[9] The bibliography on song in Homeric epic is both enormous and largely tangential to the concerns of my paper; thorough surveys of bibliography about song are provided by Goldhill (1991: 57 n. 98), Doherty (1995: 17 n. 23), and de Jong (2001: 191 n. 2).

[10] For instance, Minchin (2001: 206–209) uses Demodocus and Phemius as case studies for what makes a story interesting.

[11] E.g. Scodel (1998).

[12] Useful examples include Finkelberg (1987) on Demodocus' first song and Alden (1997) on the second song.

[13] Speech presentation in Demodocus' songs is mentioned by Goldhill (1991: 50–53), Bakker (1999:12–14), and Kelly (2008:178 n. 4). The main point of these works ranges widely, but in all of them, speech presentation is a side note rather than the central focus.

regret, entailing the assumption that the cat is not currently on the mat).[14] Within this framework, song is considered a kind of assertive speech act, since it gives the speaker's perspective on a certain set of facts or, at any rate, on content that the speaker presents as facts (rather than as emotions or desired actions). Move theory explains how these speech act types interact in a conversational exchange by classifying individual utterances according to both the speech act type and the participation (or lack thereof) of the speech in a conversational context: an initial move begins an exchange, often within a longer conversation that contains several smaller exchanges; a reactive move responds to a previous initial move; and a problematic move both refuses in some way to go along with the preceding move and entails a further reactive move.[15] As I have discussed at more length elsewhere (Beck [2008]), both the speech act type and the move type influence which speech presentation techniques are used to present individual speeches in Homeric poetry. We will see various connections between the speech act type and move type, on the one hand, and direct quotation, on the other, in the conversations that are directly quoted in Demodocus' song about Ares and Aphrodite.

Song in Homeric Poetry

This section gives an overview of how song is presented in the *Odyssey*, first showing how anomalous the patterns of speech presentation are for song in comparison to speech in general, and then looking at several individual songs to see how these general patterns work in specific examples of song. From a speech presentation point of view, songs are unusual in several ways: while songs always occur in groups, they lack a strong connection to conversational exchange; and although songs are presented predominantly by the main narrators of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* rather than by characters, they are presented almost entirely with non-direct speech presentation techniques. At the same time, the narrators' own songs, which are characterized by many direct quotations, and the songs of characters, which almost completely lack direct quotation, look entirely different as presentations of speech. Moreover, unlike other kinds of speech acts, which appear in both speech presented

[14] The foundational text for speech act theory is Austin (1962); my own thinking about speech act theory has been substantially influenced by Risselada (1993).

[15] See Kroon (1995: 58–95) for a particularly clear and helpful discussion of move terminology.

by the main narrators and speech presented by characters, characters hardly ever present other characters' songs, although the main narrator of the *Odyssey* in particular regularly depicts the songs of various characters. The main narrators use the same vocabulary to refer both to their own singing as the narrators of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and to the songs of characters within the poems, clearly showing that these songs have some fundamental similarity. Singing, unlike other kinds of speech acts regularly attributed to characters, is never referred to with any general verb of speaking, such as προσέφη (spoke to, addressed) or προσέειπε (addressed).[16] The most common verb for song, ἀείδω (sing of, chant), appears in the *Odyssey* almost exclusively to refer to the song of professional poets.[17] ἀείδω presents the same kind of speech at all narrative levels: both the main narrator and the characters in the *Odyssey* use it primarily to refer to the poetry of Demodocus and of Phemius. The only named individuals in the poem whose speech is presented with ἀείδω but who are not professional poets are Circe and Calypso, goddesses whose speech has a magical effect on their addressees that might be considered analogous to the enchantment produced by song.[18] This section provides a general overview of how song is presented, as a background and complement for the detailed analyses of speech presentation in the songs of Demodocus in the final section of the paper.

In general, speech presented by the main narrator of the *Odyssey* predominantly appears as direct quotation.[19] Song, in contrast, appears almost entirely in non-direct modes of speech presentation. No scholar has previously pointed out that song is the only kind of speech act regularly presented by the main narrators in which the default presentation

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[16] Song by the Muses, on the other hand, is presented both with ἀείδω (*Il.* 1.1) and with other verbs of speaking (ἔννεπε [tell (of)], *Od.* 1.1 and *Il.* 2.761; ἔσπετε [tell (of)], *Il.* 2.484 = 11.218 = 14.508 = 16.112; εἶπε [speak], *Od.* 1.10).

[17] Usually ἀείδω refers to speech by Phemius and Demodocus in particular (24 instances of 32 uses of ἀείδω), but sometimes it depicts a generalized singer. Twice, forms of ἀείδω present the sounds of non-humans: a nightingale singing (19.519) and the 'voice' of Odysseus' bow when he successfully strings it before killing the suitors (21.411).

[18] Walsh (1984: 14–15) compares the enchantment created by song with the negative effect of enchantment created by other means. See also Marg (1957: 16) for connections between magic and song.

[19] 87 % of all speeches presented by the main narrator of the *Odyssey* are directly quoted (545 of 628 speeches), and 7 % are presented with indirect speech (44 speeches) and speech mention (43 speeches). 11 speeches where the main narrator presents the main speech act with either indirect speech or speech mention also include free indirect speech for a subsidiary part of the speech.

strategy is speech mention. We find 27 references to songs in the Homeric poems, four of which are presented by characters.[20] Of the 23 songs presented by the main narrators,[21] 16 are presented with speech mention. Most of these references simply state that singing took place. Songs occur regularly in the Homeric poems, and clearly the main narrator of the *Odyssey* in particular is much interested in the songs of other singers. But the main narrators very rarely quote the songs of characters directly, unlike any other kind of speaking, and they never do so in the same manner that they directly quote other kinds of speech. For the most part, characters' songs simply lack content—they have a performance context but little or no content. This approach to speech presentation is unparalleled for other speech act types regularly presented by the main narrators of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

At all narrative levels—including the characters' references to other characters' songs, the main narrators' presentation of character poets, and the main narrators' references to their own songs—speech mention presents song in similar ways: song is presented primarily with speech mention on its own, but speech mention also appears in combination with indirect speech and/or free indirect speech to present certain songs in more detail. For instance, the first reference to Phemius in *Odyssey* 1 simply says that 'he was singing', focusing more on the performance context—the instrument Phemius uses, the audience who hears the song—than on what the song is about (1.153–155).[22]

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[20] *Il.* 22.391 (ἀείδοντες παιήονα [singing a victory song], very similar to the main narrator's description of the Greeks at *Il.* 1.473; here Achilles tells the Greeks to sing the paean after Hector's death, but, if they do, it is never reported by the main narrator); *Od.* 1.339 (ἄειδε; Penelope tells Phemius to sing a different song), 8.492 (ἄεισον, Odysseus orders Demodocus to sing about the Trojan Horse), 10.221 (ἀειδούσης, Odysseus describes Circe singing as his companions approach her house). In addition, *Il.* 24.720–722 describes the song of professional mourners for Hector, which I have classified as lament rather than song even though the speakers are described as ἀοιδοί (singers, 720).

[21] I omit here three of the ten examples from the list of speech mentions for song at Richardson (1990: 224 n. 33): ἄρχετο μολπῆς used of Nausicaa (led in the dancing, *Od.* 6.101) seems unlikely to refer to song as opposed to dance. Young girls do not present bardic songs, and elsewhere μέλπομαι for song appears in conjunction with other words that unambiguously refer to song (such as *Od.* 4.17–18, where the subject of ἐμέλπετο is ἀοιδός). ἐπαοιδῇ (*Od.* 19.457), a ἅπαξ λεγόμενον, is a medicinal incantation, not a bardic song. *Od.* 23.143–145 relates that a singer used his lyre to stir up a desire for μολπή and ὀρχηθμός; while this might mean singing, the narrative describes the other people present dancing rather than listening, and so it seems more likely to be dancing.

[22] Greek quotations are taken from the Oxford Classical Text; translations unless noted are from Lattimore (1965) for the *Odyssey* and Lattimore (1951) for the *Iliad*.

κῆρυξ δ' ἐν χερσὶν κίθαριν περικαλλέα θῆκε
Φημίῳ, ὅς ῥ' ἤειδε παρὰ μνηστῆρσιν ἀνάγκῃ.
ἦ τοι ὁ φορμίζων ἀνεβάλλετο καλὸν ἀείδειν …

A herald put the beautifully wrought lyre in the hands
of Phemios, who sang for the suitors, because they made him.
He played his lyre and struck up a fine song.

In this case, Phemius is described at a specific time where he sang a particular song (or songs).[23] Other speech mentions for song describe generalized or habitual singing, the topics of which presumably varied from instance to instance, and so no specific content appears.[24] Some songs presented with speech mention also include relative clauses, which otherwise rarely occur in conjunction with speech mention,[25] to give some idea of the content of the song. Such relative clauses occur in both the main narrators' own songs and the songs presented by characters. Indeed, the openings of both the *Iliad* (quoted below, 1.1–2) and the *Odyssey* take the form of an imperative to the Muse to sing about the topic of the poem, framed as speech mention, which is then expanded with a relative clause.[26]

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε …

Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus
and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians …

This invocation is a speech mention (μῆνιν ἄειδε, sing the anger) followed by a relative clause that expands on what exactly μῆνιν entails. The narrative then stops referring to the Muse as the source of the poem in favor of a narrative spoken by the narrator.[27] This structure differs from

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23 Similarly the Spartan bard at *Od.* 4.17–18, Demodocus at *Od.* 13.27–28, Phemius at *Od.* 17.261–263 and 17.358.

24 E.g. the description of the Muses on Olympus at *Il.* 1.604, αἳ ἄειδον ἀμειβόμεναι ὀπὶ καλῇ (the antiphonal sweet sound of the Muses singing), which, like the description of Phemius, focuses on the context and instrument of performance rather than on what the song(s) were about.

25 At all narrative levels in both the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, there are 12 instances of relative clauses that elaborate on the speech's content, among a total of 460 instances of speech mention.

26 Ford (1992: 19–23) points out that poetic openings in Homeric epic have similar structures across different narrative levels.

27 The *Odyssey* has no narrator addresses to the Muse other than the opening. The *Iliad* contains several more, most of which are in indirect speech (11.218–220, 12.176 [speech mention], 14.508–510, 16.112–113). 17.260–261 uses speech mention to present the narrator's rhetorical question about relating the upcoming part of his song. Minchin (1995)

the opening of Phemius' song above only in that the *Iliad* keeps going after the relative clause, while Phemius' song does not.

A second reference to Phemius' song has a similar structure to the first mention of it at 1.153–155. After the narrator identifies the subject of Phemius' song about the return of the Greeks from Troy in *Odyssey* 1 (325–327), the song proceeds with more and more detailed modes of speech presentation. At no point, however, does this language purport to offer anything like the words that Phemius used in his song.

> Τοῖσι δ' ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός, οἱ δὲ σιωπῇ
> ἥατ' ἀκούοντες· ὁ δ' Ἀχαιῶν νόστον ἄειδε
> λυγρόν, ὃν ἐκ Τροίης ἐπετείλατο Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη.
>
> The famous singer was singing to them, and they in silence
> sat listening. He sang of the Achaians' bitter homecoming
> from Troy, which Pallas Athene had inflicted upon them.

Verse 325 simply says that Phemius sang for the suitors, with no information about what was in the song. Verse 326 identifies the subject of the song (νόστον, homecoming), and the relative clause in verse 327 tells the audience(s) more about the νόστος in question. At the same time, it is unclear whose elaboration this is: are we to imagine that this relative clause was part of Phemius' song, heard by the internal audience, that the main narrator presents to the external audience; or that it is an annotation to the song directed by the main narrator to the external audience? This relative clause, in other words, provides some information about the content of Phemius' song in free indirect speech. While this presentation is longer than the first reference to Phemius' song earlier in *Odyssey* 1, the way that the song is presented has close parallels both to the earlier presentation of Phemius' song and to the references to the main narrators' presentation of their own songs at the start of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Thus, song presented by the main narrator of the *Odyssey* is unusual for narrator-presented speech not only because it includes so little direct quotation, but because it regularly combines multiple speech presentation techniques to depict extended passages of speech.[28] In sum, speech presentation firmly limits the audience's experience of any songs other

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argues that these differences between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* stem from performative rather than narratological considerations.

[28] Demodocus' songs, as we will see shortly, run somewhere between ten and one hundred verses. The few directives presented by the main narrator that include a clause in free indirect speech, in contrast, are never more than three verses long in total (*Od.* 7.226–227, 8.370–371, 13.47–48, 14.26–28, 17.59–60).

than the *Odyssey* itself, both because only the main narrator presents songs of professional bards and because those bards are almost never quoted directly when they are depicted.[29] These features of song derive their force largely because they contrast so markedly with the patterns of speech presentation for all other kinds of speech in the *Odyssey*. As we will see, the three songs of Demodocus—the longest and most detailed songs presented in the poem—consistently maintain this sense of separation or limitation while also drawing effectively on the expressive capacities of non-direct forms of speech presentation. At the same time, each of the three songs presents speech in slightly different ways that correspond partly to differences between its own subject matter and that of the other songs and partly to specific features of the individual speeches that take place within the songs.

A separation between song and other kinds of speech exists in a complementary way at the level of individual characters: no professional poet is directly quoted by the main narrator either when speaking in ordinary conversation or when singing. Phemius is quoted when speaking,[30] but never while singing; conversely, Demodocus is quoted singing, but not speaking, even when he is directly participating in the feasting among the Phaeacians and the audience might well expect to hear his speaking voice. For instance, when Odysseus asks a herald to offer the singer a portion of meat (and praise) at 8.477–481, Demodocus receives it with pleasure (χαῖρε δὲ θυμῷ [he rejoiced in his heart, my translation], 483), but does not reply. In contrast, when Telemachus orders Eumaeus to bring food to the disguised Odysseus at 17.345–347, both Eumaeus' speech to Odysseus (350–352) and Odysseus' thanks (354–355) are directly quoted. This creates a very strong separation between poetic and non-poetic speaking, contributing to the separation that the *Odyssey* consistently maintains between first-person speech and narrative.[31] The main narrator of the *Odyssey* directly quotes both first-person speech and first-person narrative throughout the poem, but third-person narrative (song) is almost never quoted directly.

[29] When Phemius speaks as a character rather than sings, he is directly quoted (*Od.* 22.344–353, supplicating Odysseus not to kill him); Achilles, whom speech mention depicts making poetry at *Il.* 9.189, is of course quoted extensively when he speaks rather than sings. Ford 1992: 16 characterizes 'the singer's activity ... as a kind of speaking that is somehow set apart'.

[30] At 22.344–353, when he successfully pleads with the rampaging Odysseus to spare his life.

[31] I have found Mackie (1997) and Scodel (1998) particularly useful on this issue.

The Songs of Demodocus

Against the backdrop of the general patterns just described, this section analyzes the songs of Demodocus in detail and shows the range of narrative effects that each major speech presentation technique can create. The two shorter songs of Demodocus (*Od.* 8.73–83 and 8.499–521) combine indirect speech with free indirect speech[32] to depict songs about the Trojan War in which Odysseus himself plays some role. Both songs balance expressivity with avoiding direct quotation for song by using two techniques that are generally rare in speech presented by the main narrator, namely, indirect speech that includes a dependent clause rather than an infinitive and free indirect speech. Free indirect speech creates a kind of audience involvement that differs from the vividness of direct speech, in that it forces the audience to think about who the presenter of the narrative is. This effect is particularly striking and apposite for song, because song has a professional narrator. Thus, speech presentation makes the songs quite expressive and engaging, while also maintaining a kind of distance between the songs and their audience(s) that is emphatically not felt in relation to the main narrator's own poem (the *Odyssey* itself), full as it is of direct quotation.

Demodocus' first song describes a conflict between Odysseus and Achilles that is otherwise unknown from our sources.[33] While the details of the quarrel—where and when it happened, and what it was about—are left extremely vague, the song nevertheless presents these vague happenings in fairly detailed and expressive language. These expressive features include both the structure of the song (in particular, the way it uses γάρ clauses) and the specific vocabulary it contains. Some of these expressive features are characteristic of the main narrator and some are found mainly or exclusively in character speech. All of these features contribute to the sense, once the song gets under way, that the narrating voices of Demodocus and the main narrator have merged.

… νεῖκος Ὀδυσσῆος καὶ Πηλεΐδεω Ἀχιλῆος,
ὥς ποτε δηρίσαντο θεῶν ἐν δαιτὶ θαλείῃ
ἐκπάγλοις ἐπέεσσιν, ἄναξ δ᾽ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
χαῖρε νόῳ, ὅ τ᾽ ἄριστοι Ἀχαιῶν δηριόωντο.
ὣς γάρ οἱ χρείων μυθήσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων

32 8.73–83 also uses speech mention.

33 The treatment of Finkelberg (1987), with bibliography, provides a good overview of the issues with the first song.

Πυθοῖ ἐν ἠγαθέῃ, ὅθ᾽ ὑπέρβη λάϊνον οὐδὸν
χρησόμενος· τότε γάρ ῥα κυλίνδετο πήματος ἀρχὴ
Τρωσί τε καὶ Δαναοῖσι Διὸς μεγάλου διὰ βουλάς.

... the quarrel between Odysseus and Peleus' son, Achilleus,
how these once contended, at the gods' generous festival,
with words of violence, so that the lord of men, Agamemnon,
was happy in his heart that the best of the Achaians were quarreling;
for so in prophecy Phoibos Apollo had spoken to him
in sacred Pytho, when he had stepped across the stone doorstep
to consult; for now the beginning of evil rolled on, descending
on Trojans, and on Danaans, through the designs of great Zeus.

The song begins in verse 75 with an accusative object of the infinitive ἀειδέμεναι (to sing, 73), the νεῖκος (quarrel) of Odysseus and Achilles. This accusative develops not with a relative clause, as we saw in the song of Phemius at 1.325–327 and as we see at the beginning of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but with an indirect statement that uses a subordinate clause (ὥς ποτε δηρίσαντο [how these once contended], 76). The song refers only in the briefest terms to features of the story that would be developed in detail by the main narrator: for instance, the words of the quarrel (76–77) are presented with speech mention. Free indirect speech, however, in the two γάρ (for) clauses found at verses 79 and 81, gives two different but complementary perspectives on *why* these vague events happened. The lack of any subordinating conjunction for these clauses creates an ambiguity about narrative level that is characteristic of free indirect speech. Moreover, this kind of γάρ clause is a common expressive strategy that is found primarily in character speech, where characters often give some kind of directive followed by a γάρ clause explaining why the addressee should go along with the order.[34] The concluding verse of the song ταῦτ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός (these things the famous singer sang for them, 83) strongly suggests that even without clear indications about who the narrator is during the song, the

[34] For instance, Penelope's order to Phemius to sing a different song (*Od.* 1.340–344): ταύτης δ᾽ ἀποπαύε᾽ ἀοιδῆς / λυγρῆς, ἥ τέ μοι αἰεὶ ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλον κῆρ / τείρει, ἐπεί με μάλιστα καθίκετο πένθος ἄλαστον. / τοίην γὰρ κεφαλὴν ποθέω μεμνημένη αἰεὶ / ἀνδρός, τοῦ κλέος εὐρὺ καθ᾽ Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἄργος (leave off singing this sad song, which always afflicts the dear heart inside me, since the unforgettable sorrow comes to me, beyond others, so dear a head do I long for whenever I am reminded of my husband, whose fame goes wide through Hellas and midmost Argos). This γάρ clause in context explains Penelope's grief rather than the directive itself, but the γάρ clause nonetheless supports the directive, since her grief at hearing the current song is the reason that she wants Phemius to sing something different.

entire passage is in fact the words of the character Demodocus. These γάρ clauses commenting on the significance of the story should be attributed to Demodocus, despite the unusual lack of any subordinating syntax for them.

Individual words and phrases that appear in the song generally belong to character speech, although the naming expressions for Agamemnon and Apollo are found primarily in narrative. As de Jong notes, the word πῆμα (misery, calamity) and the image of destruction 'rolling toward' people are strongly associated with character language.[35] Similarly, the adjective ἔκπαγλος (terrible, violent) appears primarily in character speech, and most of its occurences in narrative are found in a speech introductory formula for a strongly expressive speech act type, the vaunt.[36] At the same time, the noun-epithet formulas ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων (the lord of men, Agamemnon) and Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων (Phoibos Apollo), like most noun-epithet combinations,[37] appear mainly in narrative. ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων, found only here in the *Odyssey*, appears almost exclusively in the *Iliad* in narrative;[38] the epithet Φοῖβος is found regularly in character speech but is still primarily used by the main narrator.[39] The mixture of vocabulary associated with the main narrators and with characters gives rise to an effect similar to the narrative ambiguity that free indirect speech creates.

Taken together, these features distance the audience from a song that is not the work of the main narrator, and at the same time highlight in an effective and unusual manner the notion of beginnings and causes that is the main point of the song in relation to its broader narrative context.[40] The specific details of the quarrel are not what gives the song

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[35] de Jong (2001: 197). She points out that πῆμα appears 45 times in direct speech of 47 occurrences; the "rolling" metaphor appears three times besides this passage, always in direct speech.

[36] 25 instances, of which 7 are found in narrative. 4 of the 7 are the speech introductory formula found repeatedly in *Iliad* 13 and 14, ἔκπαγλον ἐπεύξατο, μακρὸν ἀΰσας (he vaunted terribly over him, calling in a great voice; 13.413 and 445, 14.453 and 478).

[37] Austin (1975: 47–53) persuasively discusses this phenomenon in relation to Odysseus in particular.

[38] 31 of 35 occurrences. The exceptions are *Il.* 1.442 and 506 (both spoken by Thetis), 18.111 (Achilles), and 19.172 (Odysseus).

[39] 38 instances (36 in the *Iliad*), of which 12 are in character speech. The other instance of Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων in the *Odyssey* besides this one, 3.279, appears in Nestor's tale about the fates of Menelaus and Agamemnon.

[40] Here I am taking up the position of Finkelberg (1987) that the reason for mentioning this particular incident is to tell a story about Odysseus from the beginning of the Trojan

its impact in relation to the larger contexts of either *Odyssey* 8 (as a set-up for Odysseus' long tale in books 9–12) or the *Odyssey* overall. Rather, the key feature of this song in its broader context is what the quarrel represents within the tale of the Trojan War. This is the part of the song that is depicted in the two γάρ clauses that appear in free indirect speech. For the purposes of the *Odyssey*, these γάρ clauses are in some sense what this song is about. The expressive language that appears throughout the song, such as adjectives and metaphor, complements the narrative ambiguity inherent in free indirect speech by creating a vocabulary drawn both from character speech and from narrative. These different kinds of ambiguity and multiplicity are given compelling unity as the product of Demodocus by the speech introductory and concluding expressions that bracket the song (verses 73 and 83) and name him as the speaker.

Demodocus sings his third song (8.499–521) at the request of Odysseus, who asks to hear about the Trojan Horse (8.487–498). This tale resembles the first song both in its subject matter and in the way it presents speech: it tells of the Trojan War, and it contains no direct quotations. Unlike either the first or second songs of Demodocus, however, this song regularly reminds the audience that the main narrator is presenting the speech of another character by including repeated forms of ἀείδω in its second part (514, 516). The song does not have any accusative speech mention construction like the first song that sums up briefly what the song is about at the beginning, because Odysseus has already specified the topic of the song in his request to Demodocus. Instead, it begins straightaway with indirect speech in the form of a dependent clause (500–501).

> Ὣς φάθ', ὁ δ' ὁρμηθεὶς θεοῦ ἄρχετο, φαῖνε δ' ἀοιδήν,
> **ἔνθεν ἑλών ὡς οἱ μὲν ἐϋσσέλμων ἐπὶ νηῶν**
> **βάντες ἀπέπλειον**, πῦρ ἐν κλισίῃσι βαλόντες,
> Ἀργεῖοι, τοὶ δ' ἤδη ἀγακλυτὸν ἀμφ' Ὀδυσῆα
> ἥατ' ἐνὶ Τρώων ἀγορῇ κεκαλυμμένοι ἵππῳ·
> <u>αὐτοὶ γάρ μιν Τρῶες ἐς ἀκρόπολιν ἐρύσαντο</u>.
> <u>ὣς ὁ μὲν ἑστήκει, τοὶ δ' ἄκριτα πόλλ' ἀγόρευον</u> ... *Od.* 8.499–505

War that does not depict him in a disreputable light. This subject complements the third song, which tells a story about Odysseus from the end of the war; together, these songs create a context for Odysseus' own narrative in books 9–12.

He spoke, and the singer, stirred by the goddess, began, and showed them
his song, beginning **from where the Argives boarded their well-benched ships, and sailed away**, after setting fire to their shelters;
but already all these others who were with famous Odysseus
were sitting hidden in the horse, in the place where the Trojans assembled,
for the Trojans themselves had dragged it up to the height of the city,
and now it was standing there, and the Trojans … talked endlessly …

After the indirect speech, the song quickly abandons subordinating syntax to become free indirect speech, first in the form of a γάρ clause explaining the previous indirect statement (αὐτοὶ γάρ μιν Τρῶες ἐς ἀκρόπολιν ἐρύσαντο [for the Trojans themselves had dragged it up to the height of the city], 504). As with the first song, it is unclear from the form of this independent clause whether this is part of Demodocus' song or the main narrator's comment on Demodocus' song. But the story here becomes more independent than the story in the first song, in which only γάρ clauses commenting on the action (but not the actual events) are presented without subordinating syntax of any kind. This is particularly noticeable because at the beginning of an extended free indirect speech description of the Trojans deliberating about what to do with the horse, a line-initial ὥς ('so', 'thus', 505) evokes the extremely similar ὡς, which among other uses can introduce a subordinate clause in indirect speech. At first, this ὥς might make the audience think that a further subordinate clause is coming, and such an expectation that is not fulfilled strongly underlines the independent nature of this construction.

While the Trojan Horse is standing at the gates of the city, the song focuses on the deliberations of the Trojans about what to do with it. These discussions are presented at some length in free indirect speech, without any explicit references to the main narrator (8.505–513).

ὣς ὁ μὲν ἑστήκει, τοὶ δ' ἄκριτα πόλλ' ἀγόρευον
ἥμενοι ἀμφ' αὐτόν· τρίχα δέ σφισιν ἥνδανε βουλή,
ἠὲ διαπλῆξαι κοῖλον δόρυ νηλέϊ χαλκῷ,
ἢ κατὰ πετράων βαλέειν ἐρύσαντας ἐπ' ἄκρης,
ἢ ἐάαν μέγ' ἄγαλμα θεῶν θελκτήριον εἶναι,
τῇ περ δὴ καὶ ἔπειτα τελευτήσεσθαι ἔμελλεν·
αἶσα γὰρ ἦν ἀπολέσθαι, ἐπὴν πόλις ἀμφικαλύψῃ
δουράτεον μέγαν ἵππον, ὅθ' ἥατο πάντες ἄριστοι
Ἀργείων Τρώεσσι φόνον καὶ κῆρα φέροντες.

… and now it was standing there, and the Trojans seated around it
talked endlessly, and three ways of thought found favor, either

to take the pitiless bronze to it and hack open the hollow
horse, or drag it to the cliffs' edge and topple it over,
or let it stand where it was as a dedication to blandish
the gods, and this last way was to be the end of it, seeing
that the city was destined to be destroyed when it had inside it
the great horse made of wood, with all the best of Argives
sitting within and bearing death and doom for the Trojans.

First, the Trojans try to figure out what they should do (505–509),[41] and their deliberations are depicted in such a way that, although speech is clearly involved, no explicit reference to speech appears after the generalizing speech mention ἀγόρευον in 505, which serves as a kind of overview or topic sentence for the entire assembly. Nevertheless, the Trojans' perspective emerges vividly from the story. The second part of the passage (510–513)[42] contains a γάρ clause (511–512) of the same sort that we saw in the first song, but this one is much longer and more detailed than the two γάρ clauses that appear as part of the quarrel of Achilles and Odysseus. Demodocus, or the main narrator, or both, use this γάρ clause to summarize not only the story of the Trojan Horse, but one might say the entire Trojan War story. This γάρ clause again uses character language, such as the word αἶσα (one's lot, destiny), which appears almost exclusively in direct quotation.[43] So, once again, song draws effectively on free indirect speech and character language to create an engaging vividness without any direct quotations. Here, that vividness tells the story of what the Trojans did when the horse entered their city, it does not simply reflect on the reasons for what happened in the story.

Once the Greeks enter the story, however, the structure of the narrative repeatedly underlines that the main narrator is presenting Demodocus' speech as he sings. The main narrator, it seems, is unambiguously in charge of the parts of the third song that most directly involve the experiences of Odysseus himself and the story that the *Odyssey* tells. The beginning of line 514 strongly marks the mediated reporting of this part

[41] Identified as embedded focalization by de Jong (2001: 215).

[42] Goldhill (1991: 53) notes that it is unclear what narrator presents these verses and whether they should be considered speech by Demodocus or commentary by the main narrator.

[43] 38 of 41 examples. The exceptions are two contrary to fact conditions in narrative (*Il.* 16.780 and 17.321) and Odysseus' narrative to Penelope that is presented by the main narrator with indirect speech (*Od.* 23.315). See also Griffin (1986: 49) on the wide range of superlative adjectives (such as ἄριστοι [best] in 512) that appear only or predominantly in character speech.

of the song, which begins with a general view of all the Greeks sacking Troy and gradually homes in on Odysseus in particular (8.514–518).

> **ἤειδεν δ' ὡς** ἄστυ διέπραθον υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
> ἱππόθεν ἐκχύμενοι, κοῖλον λόχον ἐκπρολιπόντες.
> ἄλλον δ' ἄλλῃ **ἄειδε** πόλιν κεραϊζέμεν αἰπήν,
> αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσῆα προτὶ δώματα Δηϊφόβοιο
> βήμεναι …
>
> **He sang then how** the sons of the Achaians left their hollow
> hiding place and streamed from the horse and sacked the city,
> and **he sang** how one and another fought through the steep citadel,
> and how in particular Odysseus went …
> … to find the house of Deïphobos …

Unlike other indirect speech in song that we have looked at thus far, the second ἄειδε (he sang, 516) introduces infinitives rather than subordinate clauses. Thus, while Odysseus is in some sense the 'subject', he is also in the accusative case as the subject of the infinitive βήμεναι ([he] went), which provides a further—albeit subtle—dimension of indirectness and subordination as compared to a subordinate clause in which the subject is in the nominative.

The song concludes with a different kind of indirect speech, a report of what Odysseus himself said about the fighting at Deiphobus' house that has just been described (519–521).

> κεῖθι δὴ αἰνότατον πόλεμον φάτο τολμήσαντα
> νικῆσαι καὶ ἔπειτα διὰ μεγάθυμον Ἀθήνην.
>   Ταῦτ' ἄρ' ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός· αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς …
>
> … and there, he said, he endured the grimmest fighting that ever
> he had, but won it there too, with great-hearted Athene aiding.
>   So the famous singer sang his tale, but Odysseus …

It is very clear here first that Odysseus and not Demodocus is the speaker—forms of φημί are never used to present song—and second that the speech of Odysseus, when presented by a narrator other than himself or the main narrator of the *Odyssey*, is not given the vividness of direct quotation.[44] On the one hand, no explicit verb of speaking governs φάτο in 519, so that it is ambiguous whether we are to imagine '[Demodocus said that] Odysseus said …' or '[the main narrator commented, apropos of Demodocus' song, that] Odysseus said …'. On the other hand, this

[44] See de Jong (2001: 216) on κεῖθι (there) and αἰνότατον (the grimmest) as examples of character language.

instance of free indirect speech falls right between two forms of ἀείδω that separate Demodocus, as the subject of these verb forms (516 and 521), from the main narrator. This means that the audience is unlikely to feel a sense of ambiguity about who narrates this speech of Odysseus even though the form of the speech itself allows that possibility. Thus, the song ends with Odysseus speaking about his own experiences in the Trojan War in a way that paradoxically combines song's regular sense of ambiguity about who the narrator of the speech is with contextual cues that defuse that ambiguity in relation to Odysseus in particular. Immediately after Odysseus' speech we find the concluding formula that ends all three of Demodocus' songs.

In these two songs the subject matter consistently affects the techniques of speech presentation. The first and third songs of Demodocus, unlike his much longer second song (8.266–367), narrate events from the Trojan War cycle that overlap to some extent the events of the *Odyssey* itself, or, at least, which overlap the experiences of Odysseus that include but are not limited to the events in the *Odyssey*.[45] Moreover, within the third song, the part that deals with subjects other than Odysseus is presented in free indirect speech, while the part about Odysseus himself—unlike most of the rest of this song, or the first song—has almost no narrative ambiguity because of the repeated forms of ἀείδω. The repeated verb forms here, and even more so in the long passage of indirect speech where Odysseus narrates his own tale to Penelope (*Od.* 23.310–342), show that repeating forms of subordinating verbs of speaking can be used to clarify who the narrator is during an extended passage of indirect speech. Conversely, the absence of subordinating verbs in such a speech presentation is one option among several, not a default. We may say that less vivid modes of speech presentation are used for topics that approach most closely to Odysseus himself, in order to draw a line between the main narrator's presentation of Odysseus and anyone else's presentation of him. At the same time, free indirect speech gives vividness both to causes of events that involve Odysseus where the causes are not specific to Odysseus (both songs) and to narration of events that do not involve Odysseus personally (the Trojan part of the third song).

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[45] This relates to the fascinating but unanswerable question of the relationship between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In relation to the first song of Demodocus in particular, Nagy (1979: 20–21) discusses the lack of overlap between the material covered by the two poems. Pucci (1987: 17–19) gives a brief sketch of his view that the *Odyssey* intentionally avoids the *Iliad*, acknowledging the difficulty of reconciling this kind of allusiveness between the poems with the theories of Milman Parry.

But these features of the first and third songs still relate to Odysseus' story, and so no direct quotation appears, in order to keep the main narrator's own presentation of Odysseus separate from his appearance in the narratives of other characters. The second song, in contrast to the other two, features a number of direct quotations; not coincidentally, its subject has nothing at all to do with Odysseus' story.[46]

The second song of Demodocus (8.266–367) begins and ends like his other two songs, but the middle section, uniquely, includes a long scene of conversation between the gods that is directly quoted. As the song begins, we are told the topic of Demodocus' song with an object noun in a speech mention construction (267) that leads to indirect speech (268–269). This in turn leads to free indirect speech where the narrative in the song continues without any subordinating conjunctions or clear indications of just who is narrating.

> Αὐτὰρ ὁ φορμίζων ἀνεβάλλετο καλὸν ἀείδειν
> <u>ἀμφ᾽ Ἄρεος φιλότητος ἐϋστεφάνου τ᾽ Ἀφροδίτης</u>,
> **ὡς τὰ πρῶτα μίγησαν ἐν Ἡφαίστοιο δόμοισι**
> **λάθρῃ**· πολλὰ δ᾽ ἔδωκε, λέχος δ᾽ ᾔσχυνε καὶ εὐνὴν
> Ἡφαίστοιο ἄνακτος· ἄφαρ δέ οἱ ἄγγελος ἦλθεν
> Ἥλιος, ὅ σφ᾽ ἐνόησε μιγαζομένους φιλότητι.
> Ἥφαιστος δ᾽ ὡς οὖν θυμαλγέα μῦθον ἄκουσε … *Od.* 8.266–272

> Demodokos struck the lyre and began singing well the story
> <u>about the love of Ares and sweet-garlanded Aphrodite</u>,
> **how they first lay together in the house of Hephaistos**
> **secretly**; he gave her much and fouled the marriage
> and bed of the lord Hephaistos; to him there came as messenger
> Helios, the sun, who had seen them lying in love together.
> Hephaistos, when he had heard the heartsore story of it …

The speech mention opening of the song (267) takes the form of a prepositional phrase rather than the accusative direct object νεῖκος (quarrel, 8.75) that opened the first song, but the basic effect is the same. Then a subordinate clause in indirect speech amplifies this brief statement of the song's subject (268–269), followed quickly by independent sentences of free indirect speech (270 ff.).[47] The excerpt quoted above includes a

[46] This is not to deny the various attempts to draw thematic connections between the tale of Ares and Aphrodite and that of the *Odyssey*. But Odysseus is not a character in the second song, nor is any mortal character, and this is an important difference between the second song of Demodocus and his other two songs.

[47] Garvie (1994: 295), in contrast, calls this direct discourse. Similarly, Richardson (1990: 86) says of the second song, 'the intention to render the song by quoting the singer's words indirectly has given way to what must be taken as direct speech'.

speech within Demodocus' song, the message from Helius telling Hephaestus about the misbehavior of Aphrodite and Ares (270, ἄγγελος ἦλθεν [came as messenger], referred to as a μῦθον [story] in 272). This speech—unlike many of those that follow later in the song—does not derive meaning from gaps between the literal content of the speech and some unstated or implied intention of the speaker, either for Helius' addressee, Hephaestus, or for the audience(s) of Demodocus' song. As a result, a non-direct mode of speech presentation includes all the information that is necessary for the audience to understand what is happening.[48]

Aside from these informational messages brought by Helius, the other speeches in the song are quoted directly because their specific language and not simply their propositional content creates their meaning. The very first quotation in the song, Ares' suggestion to Aphrodite that they take advantage of Hephaestus' absence to go to bed together, provides a short but clear example of this (8.291–295).

ἔν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῦ χειρὶ ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε·
  "Δεῦρο, φίλη, λέκτρονδε τραπείομεν εὐνηθέντες·
οὐ γὰρ ἔθ' Ἥφαιστος μεταδήμιος, ἀλλά που ἤδη
οἴχεται ἐς Λῆμνον μετὰ Σίντιας ἀγριοφώνους."
  Ὣς φάτο, τῇ δ' ἀσπαστὸν ἐείσατο κοιμηθῆναι.

He took her by the hand and spoke to her and named her, saying:
  'Come, my dear, let us take our way to the bed, and lie there,
for Hephaistos is no longer hereabouts, but by this time
he must have come to Lemnos and the wild-spoken Sintians.'
  So he spoke, and she was well pleased to sleep with him.

The introductory verse that is used at 291 consistently introduces affectionate or emotional speech, often but not always between a man and a woman who have some kind of love relationship.[49] Thus, even before the speech begins, the formulaic introduction to the direct quotation (a formula which would not be used if the speech were not quoted) creates expectations about what Ares says. The speech itself includes several features that are typical of direct quotation, such as the vocative φίλη (my dear, 292), the subjunctive used for a suggestion (τραπείομεν [let

[48] The same pragmatic factors apply to the second message that Helius brings to Hephaestus that the lovers have been caught in Hephaestus' trap (Ἠέλιος γάρ οἱ σκοπιὴν ἔχεν εἶπέ τε μῦθον [for Helios had kept watch for him, and told him the story], 302).

[49] This verse appears eleven times, and five times in the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 2.302, 8.291, 10.280, 11.247, 15.530; *Il.* 6.253 and 406, 14.232, 18.384 and 423, 19.7). *Od.* 2.302, which introduces a derisive speech of Antinous to Telemachus, presents strong emotions that are negative rather than warmth and affection.

us take our way], 292), and the γάϱ clause Ares offers as an inducement to go along with his directive (293–294). A non-direct presentation of Ares' directive would leave out all these features (with the possible exception of the γάϱ clause, which might appear in free indirect speech), and would therefore in an important sense not present the directive accurately. From one point of view, the speech is quoted directly because to do otherwise would not present the speech appropriately, but, from another perspective, direct quotation is possible here but not in the other two songs of Demodocus because the content of this story—unlike the other two songs—does not overlap with the main narrator's own tale about Odysseus.

In the second half of the song, the story focuses on the aftermath of the liaison between Ares and Aphrodite, as the gods discuss and eventually resolve the issues that the affair has created. All the speeches that occur in this part of the story are quoted directly, for the same combination of reasons as the speech of Ares (292–294): the conversational exchange that is a key aspect of the story here would not come across effectively unless it were quoted directly, and direct speech is compatible with this tale because the subject matter does not overlap with the subject matter of the *Odyssey* itself. The conversation proceeds as follows. First Hephaestus makes a long angry speech (306–320) to the gods that—in addition to expressive features like vocatives that we find in Ares' speech at 292–294—contains multiple moves as well as subsidiary moves to support the main moves. Multiple moves within a single speech, as well as subsidiary moves in support of a main move, appear almost exclusively in direct quotation. Hephaestus' speech here includes a directive to the gods as a group (307, and an imperative at 313), a purpose clause (307) explaining the rationale behind the directive, and a long discussion about who is responsible for the current state of affairs (310–312). The end of the speech presents a threat, that Hephaestus will not release the lovers until Zeus pays back the gifts Hephaestus gave for Aphrodite (317–319). Non-direct speech occasionally presents a single subsidiary move,[50] but, most often, non-direct speech presents a single concise move. Thus, like Ares' suggestion to Aphrodite, Hephaestus' speech has many features important to its meaning and function in the larger conversational context that can only be presented in direct quotation.

[50] Later in *Odyssey* 8, for example, Odysseus refers in passing to something Alcinous said, ἀπείλησας … εἶναι (you boasted that … were …, 8.383), which in its original directly quoted context (8.236–255) is a subsidiary part of the speech.

In the remainder of the conversations that the song presents, we see a similarly wide range of expressive and interactive features in the speeches that are quoted directly. The male gods comment in surprise that the lame Hephaestus has captured the swift Ares (329–332); Apollo and Hermes exchange a lubricious question and (emotive) response that results in general laughter (335–343); Poseidon makes a plea to Hephaestus (347–348), who makes a problematic reply (350–353) that elicits a promise from Poseidon (355–356) and agreement from Hephaestus (358).[51] The freed lovers each hasten to leave the scene of their embarrassment, the conflict is resolved, and the song is over (ταῦτ' ἄρ' ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός [so the famous singer sang his song], 367). All of these speeches have features that cannot be presented without direct quotation. Plea (347–348), a directive subtype with a marked emotional component, is strongly associated with direct quotation when presented by the main narrator of the *Iliad*,[52] although characters normally present it non-directly, using a form of λίσσομαι (pray, entreat) to indicate that the directive is a plea.[53] Similarly, emotive speeches (335–343), questions (335–337), and problematic moves (350–353) are all strongly associated with direct quotation. The last two speeches, Poseidon's promise and Hephaestus' agreement, appear in direct quotation not because these speech act types generally require direct quotation, but to present in direct quotation the entire conversation, including the resolution of Hephaestus' grievance. These last two speeches are not themselves problematic or emotional speech act types, but they are part of an overall conversation that is quite expressive and problematic. Thus, the individual speeches that are quoted in the second half of the song, as well as the entire conversation between Hephaestus and Poseidon, have prominent features that require direct quotation to present them effectively.

The second song merges the narrating voices of the main narrator and of Demodocus in a quantitatively different way from the other two songs of Demodocus. First, the sense of dislocation or confusion about who the narrating voice belongs to persists over a much longer

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[51] Scodel (2008: 106–107), analyzing this episode as an example of apology, notes that Ares does not speak in this part of the song, that no one thinks Ares is sorry for what he has done, and that the whole notion of repayment, given the gods' infinite wealth, is absurd.

[52] We find 11 examples of pleas in narrator-presented speech in the *Iliad*, nine of which are quoted directly. The main narrator of the *Odyssey* does not present any pleas.

[53] Thus, the use of direct quotation here is one of the main narrator-like features of Demodocus' song.

stretch of the *Odyssey* than it does in either the first or the third song. Although the song is 100 verses long, after ὡς … μίγησαν (how … they lay together) in verse 268, no subordinating syntax of any kind reminds the audience that the main narrator is presenting a song of Demodocus. This is the main reason for the much noted sense in this song that the main narrator has effectively vanished as an intermediary between Demodocus and the external audience. During the first quarter of the song (through verse 290), the song has the form of a narrative in free indirect speech. Once direct quotations start appearing, the same sense that Demodocus and the main narrator have merged persists, although it is inaccurate to call a direct quotation a piece of free indirect speech. The quotations unambiguously present the speech of the quoted speaker; what is unclear is who presents the quotations. In other words, who says τὸν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἔπειτα διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης (then in turn the courier Argeïphontes answered, 8.338), a type of formula that is very common in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but which hardly appears in the speech of any non-poet character? The main narrator, or Demodocus? Both?

The parts of the song that link the directly quoted speeches meet the main criterion for free indirect speech, namely, a piece of narrative where it is unclear whether the narrating voice belongs to the presenting narrator or the character whose speech is being presented. Moreover, this song is unique not only because it uses direct quotation, but because it uses quotation as the most usual way to present speech, with the same kinds of speech introductory verses and conversational structures that the main narrator uses.[54] The combination of this approach to direct quotation with the use of free indirect speech to present almost the entire song almost completely effaces the main narrator from the picture (or, one might equally say, effaces Demodocus, whose reappearance in the concluding verse [ταῦτ' ἄρ' <u>ἀοιδὸς</u> ἄειδε (so the … <u>singer</u> sang his song), 367] comes as something of a surprise). While this song temporarily pushes aside the main narrator, it does not push aside the *Odyssey* itself, since it has a completely different subject from the song in which it occurs. This important difference in subject explains why the second song takes on an independent life of its own so much more than

[54] See Beck (2005) for a more extensive discussion of the aspects of Demodocus' speech presentation. His speech is unlike that of any other character in the *Odyssey* who presents direct quotation, in that it resembles that of the main narrator.

the other two songs of Demodocus do, which might appear in some sense to become the *Odyssey* if they were presented in the same way as the second song.

Many different features of speech presentation for song combine to make song unique among the kinds of speech acts found in the Homeric poems. Overall, speech presentation techniques make the songs presented by characters in the *Odyssey* both very engaging and yet slightly removed from the audience. Song consistently features speech presentation strategies that highlight the figure of the narrator precisely at points where the narrator is a singer like the narrator of the *Odyssey* itself. Yet no other kind of speech act type entails the kinds of limitations in speech presentation that song does. Song is presented only by poets or poet characters, virtually never by non-poet characters. Similarly, poet characters can be directly quoted either as poets or as regular speakers, but not both. Moreover, the main narrator of the *Odyssey* presents song almost exclusively with non-direct modes of speech presentation. Although both indirect speech that uses a subordinate clause and free indirect speech are found outside song,[55] no other kind of speech act except song consistently relies on these modes of presentation—particularly on free indirect speech, which appears both more often and at greater length in songs than in any other kind of speech act type—as its primary mode of presentation. Indeed, when Demodocus is directly quoted, it is only when he is singing a song whose subject is far removed from the subject of the *Odyssey*. As a result, this song, and this song only, becomes extraordinarily vivid for the audience, yet with no possibility that it will take the place of the *Odyssey*. Conversely, the parts of Demodocus' songs that relate most closely to Odysseus' own experiences are presented in such a way that the main narrator has an explicit presence in the song, mediating between Demodocus and the external audience. This maximizes the sense of separation between Demodocus and the external audience at points when the stories told by Demodocus come closest to the story being told by the main narrator of the *Odyssey*. Paradoxically, the myriad limitations on how song may be presented make song stand out among modes of speech in the *Odyssey*. The distancing effect of many of these limitations yields not a sense of disengagement, but an even livelier vividness and interest than more commonly used speech presentation strategies would have created.

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[55] Contra Richardson (1990: 82–88), who argues that 'song' is a category of Homeric speech presentation.

A fascinating but ultimately unanswerable question is why these distancing strategies of speech presentation appear. One result of the sense of distance between the external audience and poetry in the *Odyssey* is that while the poem strongly directs our attention to scenes involving poets, the external audience is not entirely sure what the *Odyssey* thinks about poets and poetry. The topic is, nonetheless, one of lively interest to generations of scholars and readers, hence the enormous bibliography on poets and song in the *Odyssey*. A recent treatment argues that the main narrator feels competitive toward Odysseus, and discusses speech presentation strategies for song in connection with this idea;[56] another thinks that Demodocus' songs are presented the way they are in order to avoid confusion between the *Odyssey* and Demodocus' poetry (Edwards [1987: 40]). It is certainly true that Demodocus models what an interesting story, and the reaction of its audience, should look like (Minchin [2001: 206–209]), but this does not fully explain the nature of the poet, the story, or the audience. The *Odyssey* presents song as it does in order to mark song out as a unique and somehow privileged kind of speech that is not as easily available to the external audience as other forms of speech are, and in particular to separate the *Odyssey* itself from other songs that appear within the poem. The motivation for doing this—to whom or what the motivation should be attributed, and what the motivation was—remains ultimately unknowable.

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[56] Kelly (2008). Although I have benefited very much from Kelly's paper, I find this part of his argument unpersuasive, because the ways of speaking that Kelly claims are associated with, and defining of, poets seem to me to be characteristic not only of poets but also of many other kinds of speakers.

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COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE HOMERIC SIMILE

Jonathan Ready

Abstract

To show their competence as performers, oral poets make use of a figurative spectrum of distribution: they deploy both idiolectal similes unique to their performances and dialectal and pan-traditional similes shared with other poets. Moreover, when presenting idiolectal similes, they at times generate similes that come down squarely on the idiolectal end of the figurative spectrum of distribution and at times turn to similes that move from one end of the spectrum to the other. With these facts in mind, we can sharpen our understanding of Homer's compositional practices when it comes to similes.

Introduction

If we look at how modern-day oral poets use similes, we can learn a good deal about how Homer composed his similes.[1] Part I of this essay lays out some questions we can ask of and a few things we can learn about the similes in a textualized oral poem when, critically, the following obtains: that poem is but one in a much larger corpus made up of poems that

[1] Writing in 1957, Notopoulos noted that "so far [Homeric similes] have never been studied in the light of comparative oral literature" (323). Bowra considers the Homeric simile alongside those from other traditions of "heroic poetry" (1952: 267–280). In demonstrating that similes function as structural markers in performance, Martin (1997) points to a range of modern-day oral poetries to buttress his claims. For comparative work on the Homeric simile that looks to the Ancient Near East, see Damon (1961: 264–271), Puhvel (1991: 21–29), Rollinger (1996: 166–171), and West (1997: 217–219 and 242–252).

The reader will have perceived that my loyalties lie with the oralists. To be sure, because the Homeric poems exist and have existed for quite a long time as written texts, an oralist perspective cannot account for every last detail. But it can account for a lot: "the oral traditional background behind the Homeric poems is deeply significant, in fact fundamental, for a proper understanding of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*" (Kelly [2007: 1]). Given that folklorists and ethnographers continue to make great strides in documenting oral poetry in performance (see, e.g., Collins [1998], Honko [1998], and Reichl [2007]), the Homerist's understanding of what was required for and what it meant for the poet to perform before an audience will only deepen.

the collector has gathered from a number of poets in a given area over a limited period of time. I will be working with two such corpora: that from the former Yugoslavia contains poems composed by the performers themselves; that from Saudi Arabia contains both poems composed by the performers themselves and poems composed by other (often earlier) poets, which informants recite from memory. I draw attention in this Part to two features of these modern-day oral poets' use of similes. (1) First, over the course of a single poem, poets generate both similes that other poets use and similes that are only found in their own poems (idiolectal similes). By moving around in this way on a figurative spectrum of distribution, they show their competence as performers. (2) Second, poets construct idiolectal similes in two different ways. Sometimes the entity described in the simile (the tenor, defined below) has not elsewhere been the subject of a simile. At other times, it has. With the former arrangement, poets stress the uniqueness of their contribution. With the latter type of simile, poets both display their ability to do what other poets are doing and advertise their presentation of something distinctive. Part II of this essay engages in a thought experiment: what happens if, treating the Homeric poems as we treat a poem that is surrounded by numerous peers, we imagine that Homer did (1) and (2) as well?[2]

Part I. *The Comparative Material*

I.1. *The Figurative Spectrum of Distribution*

We can take a geographical approach to the various elements of an oral poet's presentation. These elements include, but are not limited to, the words and phrases the performer uses, the sorts of things on which he focuses, and what he does with his body. The poet's "idiolect" consists of elements unique to his performances. His "dialect" comprises elements found in his performances and in the performances of poets in his region. Elements found in his performances and in the performances of poets in his and other regions are said to be "pan-traditional".[3] Another word that

[2] This essay gives a sampling of the raw data that is at the heart of a lengthier study of the Homeric simile from the perspectives offered by comparative analysis. Due to limitations of space, I shall not go into some of the more abstract sociological and cognitive approaches that can support my arguments.

[3] As an integrated trio, idiolect, dialect, and pan-traditional come from Foley (1990); cf. Pavese (2003: 39). Folklorists routinely investigate geographic contours. In his introduction to a Karakalpak oral epic, Reichl notes the differences between a "singer's version,

I use to embrace both dialect and pan-traditional is "shared". In short, a spectrum of distribution emerges. One can place similes (tenor/vehicle pairings), simile vehicles, and simile vehicle portions into the categories of idiolect, dialect, and pan-traditional. (In the simile, "When she slightly lowers her veil her front teeth show, // Like *lightning flashing under the clouds of late autumn*" [Kurpershoek (1994: 137, my emphasis)], "teeth" is the tenor, "lightning" is the vehicle, and the entire italicized segment is the vehicle portion.) I speak, then, of a *figurative* spectrum of distribution as one manifestation of the larger spectrum of distribution. Our analysis aims to be synchronic; as best we are able, we seek a snapshot of the topography of simile at one moment in time.

Four points call for clarification. First, investigators of oral poetry often look at idiolectal variations on shared formulas and/or ideas.[4] By contrast, for a simile to be idiolectal in my model, it must express an idea that only one poet seems to offer. With this proposition, I follow Michael Taft's (a scholar of the blues) definition of idiolectal.[5] The word "idea" brings me to a second point. I classify similes as idiolectal, dialectal, or pan-traditional based on their content: that is, the ideas they express or the stories they tell, not on their phraseology. Accordingly, I take an elastic approach to the category of the "shared" in so far as I do not address idiolectal variation in the phrasing of such materials. For instance, if two poets from the same region are the only ones to use a

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a version current among a group of singers or a version found in a particular language and among a specific ethnic group" (2007: 101–102). Cohen studies the positions of blues guitarists' hands: "One may speak variously of a regional style (analogous to a dialect), a local style (analogous to a patois), or a personal style (analogous to an idiolect)" (2008: 154). In looking at blues "song lyrics, melodies, and instrumental figures" (1982: 8), Evans prefers to work with four levels: idiolect, local tradition, "somewhat vaguely defined broader regions of tradition", and "the folk blues tradition as a whole" (262). Evans' model will come into play when I examine oral poems from Saudi Arabia.

[4] Harvilahti considers the different ways that related Altaic poets generate the phrase "Two identical X" (see 2000: 224–227). Foley notes the different preferences of two South Slavic poets from the same region when presenting the common idea of heading toward a city or speaking of a certain ruler (see 1990: 186 and 189 n. 58; cf. 182–183, 188, 192 and 196). Cf. Reichl (2000: 30).

[5] See Taft (2006: 58 and 279–281 for the general principle and 203, 207, 232, 245, 247, 260, and 265 for specific examples). (For blues as oral poetry, see Foley [2002: 44]; cf. Taft [2006: 286–287].) Idiolectal material need not be original to the poet who uses it: it could have been invented by his teacher, for instance, or by a contemporary who no longer employs it (cf. Zumthor [1984: 91]). Furthermore, Foley explores how, although idiolectal material may be unique to a single poet, it is fashioned in keeping with traditional rules of composition (see 1990: e.g., 175, 183, and 188); cf. Foley (1995: 157) and Reichl (2007: 130).

simile comparing a horse to an ostrich, I consider the simile dialectal, regardless of variations in phraseology specific to the individual poets. The third point builds on the second. We wish to say that two things that are not verbatim the same are nonetheless the same. This move requires us to adopt from many oral poets an emic, or native, definition of the "same", different from that to which we may be accustomed. For the South Slavic singer of tales, for example, to reproduce a song "word for word" means not to repeat it verbatim but to make use of the same compositional building blocks (for example, lines, scenes, speeches) in the correct order.[6] From this perspective, two similes need not be exactly identical in order to be considered the same.[7] Fourth and finally, it must be noted that in many traditions a poet never explicitly acknowledges in the act of performance his use of idiolectal or shared materials as such.[8]

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[6] See Lord (1954: 240–245 and 266, 1974: 73, and 2000: 28). (For the South Slavic singer's definition of a "word", see Foley [1990: 44–45 and 47–50 and 1995: 2]; cf. Čolaković [2008b: 279 n. 18].) Investigators of other traditions also attest to the idea that for two poems to be considered the same they do not have to be shown to be verbatim the same: see Jensen (1980: 83 and 86), Azuonye (1983: 334–338), Goody (1987: 87–89 [cf. 111 and 168]), and Badalkhan (2002: 309 and 312); cf. Opland (1998: 7–9). For attestation of this principle in reference to a teller of folktales, see Dégh (1989: 180), and in reference to amateur storytellers (i.e., subjects in a psychologist's experiment), see Bartlett (1995: 175). Audience members cleave to this understanding of the "same" as well. As Jensen comments, "Not even the best educated and most bookish person in archaic Greece can have noticed the fact that oral transmission is flexible; in a way this was only really noticed when Parry and Lord went to Yugoslavia with their technical equipment and could make pedantic comparisons between different performances of the same text" (2000: 63). Especially revealing are modern-day instances in which an audience member in possession of a written version of the poem, having followed along in this text while the singer performs, claims that the singer's presentation matched the written version. The South Slavic bard Avdo Međedović recounts how an audience member said Međedović sang a song just as it was written out in a songbook: "Bravo! I'm here all the way from Lauž, and here's the songbook with this song in it. The way I read it, you haven't made a single mistake" (Lord [1974: 66; cf. 78]). This declaration only makes sense if the audience member thought of the "same" in the manner delineated above. Compare the judgment passed on a performance of the Pabuji epic in the Indian state of Rajasthan: "During the performance, I asked another guest, who understood Mewari, one of the five dialects of Rajasthan, if he could check Mohan Bhopa's rendition against a transcription by John D. Smith [1991], of Cambridge University, of a version performed in a different part of Rajasthan in the 1980s. Give or take a couple of turns of phrase, and the occasional omitted verse, the two versions were nearly identical, he said" (Dalrymple [2010: 95]). I suspect that Dalrymple and his source did not have the same definition of "identical".

[7] I am not alone in adopting this definition of "same-ness" when it comes to similes. Similar principles underlie Black's collating of parallels for similes and metaphors in the Sumerian poem *Lugalbanda* (see 1998: 126–153).

[8] The poet's masking his source of material is most pronounced in the work of one who calls on a higher authority for guidance. See Ford (1992: 90–91) on Homer's

Yet we can trust the knowledgeable tradition-oriented audience member to grasp the poet's modulation between the idiolectal and the shared.[9]

Now, this model is exceedingly abstract. Theory and practice will collide given the inherent difficulties in categorizing similes (or any component of a poem) by frequency and geographical distribution. First, the categorization of a simile as idiolectal is a leap of faith. Absent the recording of the entire tradition at that moment, one can never be certain as to the status of something that appears only once or only in the work of one poet. Its singularity could simply be a mirage.[10] We do well to remember Albert Lord's admonishment: "A new song in this genre has new names, but almost everything else in it has appeared before in the tradition in one form or another" (1991: 76–77; cf. 42). Second, the assigning of a simile to the category of "dialect" is a helpful heuristic exercise but equally fallible because it also depends on the size of the collected sample. David Evans aims to explore the local blues tradition of Drew, Mississippi: "The local tradition is the repertoire of song lyrics, melodies, and instrumental figures that a group of blues singers in a community synthesizes, shares, and draws from in composing songs" (1982: 8); "The sum total of elements shared by the blues singers in a community is what I call a *local tradition*" (111, emphasis in original). Yet, a local tradition is not hermetically sealed: "It does not imply that these singers lacked contacts and cross-influences with others from outside the area" (174). As a result, one cannot plot the exact boundaries of the Drew tradition: "Probably there was a great deal of overlap between the traditions of adjacent areas, and we should not really seek to define them precisely in geographical terms" (174). Third, in his introduction to a Tulu epic from Karnataka, India, Lauri Honko expresses reservations

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invocations to the Muse(s) and Finkelberg (1998: 59) on Hesiod's meeting with the Muses at *Theogony* 30–33 (cf. Walsh [1984: 32]). Even when not performing, poets will not necessarily admit to using idiolectal and shared material. Zimmerman notes the South Slavic singer's reluctance to claim that he invented anything in a song (see 1986: 72). Van der Heide comments on the way modern-day Kirghiz singers (*manaschis*) of the Manas epic discuss their craft: "The epic and art of recital is of course also learnt by practice and guidance from older *manaschis*, but as the belief in inspiration by the Spirit of Manas himself is so strong, training is hardly talked about" (2004: 67). See Macleod (1983: 5–6).

9 On the competence of many audience members, see, e.g., Zimmerman (1986: 63–64), Kurpershoek (1995: 50), Badalkhan (2002: 306–309 and 312–313), and Johnson (2002: 188–189). On the risk of overstating the audience's abilities, see Scodel (2002: 7–13).

10 See Parker (2004–2005: 358) and Scott (2009: 22 and 98); cf. Hatto (1989: 74 and 81), Kurpershoek (1994: 60–62), and Scodel (2002: 18).

about trying to determine what constitutes shared material. Speaking of the "epic register", which contains "common storylines, descriptions, multiforms, phrases, formulae" (1998: 167) and so intersects with the concepts of the dialectal and the pan-traditional,[11] he notes,

> [w]e tend to think of epic registers as collective traditions. Yet we are not capable of creating a realistic picture of what is commonly used and what is individual in the expressions we assign to the register. Our usage is a consequence of our material base, which does not allow us to draw so close to the register that its collectivity becomes more than just a conjecture.
> (1998: 71; cf. 92–93)

At the same time, I am heartened by the observation that (to pick the device under scrutiny here) some of the same similes are repeatedly used by different poets, whereas others simply are not. That difference should mean something.[12] It would be safer to deploy rubrics like "infrequent", "relatively less frequent", and "frequent", or "perhaps idiolectal" and "perhaps dialectal". But I use the labels idiolect, dialect, and pan-traditional both for rhetorical purposes, that is, for the sake of argument, and for the sake of clarity. All we can ever do at any one point in time is exhibit and interpret the available data. The goal is not to insist stubbornly that a specific simile is, for example, idiolectal or dialectal but to suggest that there are such categories of similes.[13]

I.2. *The Figurative Spectrum of Distribution and Competence in Performance*

One can trace an oral poet's use of similes diachronically (that is, over the course of his textualized poems) or synchronically (that is, over the course of one poem). This section begins with two examples of the latter procedure: first, a look at a South Slavic Muslim (Bosniac) singer of epic; second, a look at a Saudi Arabian Bedouin poet. In each case, we shall see the poet ranging across the figurative spectrum of distribution. The discussion then moves on to ask what the poet achieves thereby.

[11] "Concentration on learning a genre, say, oral epics, opens up a pathway to a special language, constitutive for a large number of narratives. The expressions shared by many singers within that language we just called 'epic register'" (Honko [2000a: 21]).

[12] Cf. Evan's defense of the concept of a "local tradition" (equivalent to "dialect" in our model). Elements common to different local traditions are not equally popular in all those areas: "The important fact is that the Drew performers play and sing many of the same things, while in other areas these usually occur as isolated elements" (1982: 255).

[13] Cf. Kurpershoek (1994: 62).

Between 1933 and 1935, Milman Parry collected oral epic poems in the former Yugoslavia and recorded conversations with the poets. The material he gathered is housed in the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature in Harvard University's Widener Library. Subsequent return trips in the 1950s and 1960s enabled Albert Lord and David Bynum to enhance the Collection's holdings. Translations of nine poems collected in "that part of northern Bosnia known locally as Bihaćka Krajina" (16) appear in Bynum (1993). Eight of the original language texts are found in Volume 14 of *Serbocroatian Heroic Songs* (Bynum [1979]).[14] The four singers included in these volumes all came from the same local tradition or dialectal area. Mujo Velić "came from the village of Kamenica, which was about and [sic] hour and a half walking time from Bihać" (Bynum [1979: 5]). Bihać is a city in the northern municipality of Bihać in today's Bosnia and Herzegovina. Murat Žunić "was by birth from the village of Bužim in the district of Bosanska Krupna" (Bynum [1979: 8]), a municipality that abuts the northeast border of the Bihać municipality. Ćamil Kulenović was from Kulen Vakuf in the municipality of Bihać (see Bynum [1979: 12]). Milman Parry worked with these three during his second trip to Yugoslavia from June 1934 to September 1935. Finally, Ibrahim Nuhanović was from Cazin, a town in a municipality of the same name that is directly north of the municipality of Bihać. Lord and Bynum recorded Nuhanović in 1963 (see Bynum [1979: 14]).

Let us take a closer look at Ćamil Kulenović's *Mustay Bey of the Lika Rescues Crnica Ali Agha's Sister Ajkuna* (PN 1941).[15] The poem has eleven short similes in 1081 lines. I provide one example for each category of idiolectal, dialectal, and pan-traditional similes.

Kulenović fashions an idiolectal image that reminds the Homerist of Hektor's vision of addressing Achilleus like a lover (*Il.* 22.127–128):

[14] Bynum (1993) provides an original language text for the remaining poem, Murat Žunić's *The Wedding of Omer Bey of Osik*. In this essay, I use the titles of songs as they are presented in Lord (1974) and Bynum (1993) (as opposed to, e.g., in Kay [1995]).

[15] The Parry number (PN) is the inventory number given to much of the material (both poems and interviews with the poets) in the Milman Parry Collection. PN 1941 was "received" by Parry in written form (from the singer's own hand) on April 1, 1935 (Kay [1995: 205]). Kay provides dates of recording or acquisition for the material Parry gathered between 1933 and 1935.

So the plumes atop the Bey's head went whispering
like man and maid murmuring
over the windowsill at midnight.
(PN 1941. Bynum [1993: 339, lines 492–494];
Bynum [1979: 401, lines 492–494])[16]

Kulenović twice employs the following dialectal simile:

They drank their drink like men sick with the flux.
(PN 1941. Bynum [1993: 327, line 22 and 345, line 735];
Bynum [1979: 388, line 22 and 408, line 735])

Only Murat Žunić (see above) uses the simile as well:

Then the Bey and he began to drink and drank abundantly, like men who suffer with a flux. (PN 1930. Bynum [1993: 169, lines 657–658; original language text on p. 168])[17]

Kulenović is fond of the pan-traditional comparison of victorious warriors to wolves:

I swear to you by God, my brothers, they were fierce as darkling wolves
(PN 1941. Bynum [1993: 348, line 850];
Bynum [1979: 411, line 850])[18]

Compare the use of the simile by Avdo Međedović "of the village Obrov not far from Bijelo Polje in eastern Montenegro" (Lord [1974: 3]):[19]

and all the Turks around us, like the dusky wolves on the mountains
(PN 6840. Lord [1974: 112];
Bynum and Lord [1974: 123, lines 2417–2418])[20]

In this one poem, then, Kulenović offers similes that fall at different places on the figurative spectrum of distribution.

Between 1989 and 1998, P. Marcel Kurpershoek recorded the oral poetry and narratives of the Bedouin Oteiba and Dawasir tribes in the Najd desert of Saudi Arabia.[21] Illiterate poets compose poems prior to

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[16] The second citation refers to the text of the English translation, and the third citation refers to the original language text.

[17] PN 1930 was dictated some time in 1935 to Nikola Vujnović, Parry's amanuensis.

[18] Cf. "they struck their enemy like packs of highland wolves" (PN 1941. Bynum [1993: 350, line 954]; Bynum [1979: 414, line 954]).

[19] Bijelo Polje was the "second center" in which Parry worked (Lord [1954: 16]).

[20] PN 6840 was dictated to Vujnović on July 5–12, 1935.

[21] The name given to poetry "composed in the vernacular, rather than classical, literary Arabic" (Sowayan [1985: 1]) varies by region. "Nabati" is used in "the Arabian Peninsula and neighboring areas … but is not used elsewhere, even in neighboring Iraq" (Holes and Athera [2009: 2]). Kurpershoek is dealing with Nabati poetry, but talks of "Najdi"

their performance and then either perform them themselves or have a transmitter (reciter) do so.[22] Kurpershoek collected material from poets who performed their own poems and from poets who performed poems composed by others (in many instances quite long ago). From 1994 to 2002, he published his results in a magnificent four-volume set.[23] Each poem and story is transliterated into Roman characters, and a line-by-line English translation is provided on the facing page. The average length of a textualized poem in Volume 1, for instance, is nineteen lines, each line comprising two lengthy hemistiches. The shortest poem in Volume 1 is six lines; the longest is thirty-six.[24] I need not point out the myriad differences between this poetry, on the one hand, and Homeric or Bosniac epic, on the other hand, but the project of comparative oral poetry is sufficiently mature to see past such disjunctions. (I relegate to a footnote some preliminary comments on this matter.)[25]

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poetry when referring to the material he collected so as to indicate its precise provenance. Sowayan (1985) is a standard introduction to Nabati poetry. When speaking of the poets in Kurpershoek's corpus, I replicate the transcription conventions for Arabic names used in Kurpershoek (2001).

22 For another tradition that differentiates between poet and performer, see Badalkhan (2002). Cf. Zumthor (1984: 167).

23 A fifth volume, published in 2005, provides detailed indices and a glossary.

24 Volume 1 contains thirty-one poems composed and performed by Abdullah ad-Dindan and two poems transmitted by Dindan. I have excluded those latter two from the statistics given here.

25 One should begin with two questions. (1) Are the Bedouin poems to be understood as oral poetry? Yes. Finnegan shows that oral poetry can involve prior composition: (see 1992: 52–87, esp. 80–84). (On a related note, scholarship has learned that there is no contradiction in memorization being one of the oral poet's tools: see Jensen [1980: e.g., 17 and 44–45], Zumthor [1984: 181 and 203], Thomas [1992: 36–40], Opland [1998: 65 and 76], Johnson [2002: 192–193], Ong [2002: 62–63], and Yaqub [2007: 93–95].) Not all of oral poetry has to be composed in performance like the Homeric and Bosniac epics. (Yet, it should be noted that, whereas Kurpershoek contends that "there is never any doubt concerning the poem's exact, original wording" when "highly competent poets" perform their own poems [1999: 27], other scholars find that the poets who transmit the poems of others are composing as they perform: see Alwaya [1977: 56], Palva [1978: 7 n. 3 and 1992: 9], and Bailey [1991: 395] [cf. Johnson (2002: 189)]; for a different view, see Kurpershoek [1995: 74].) At the same time, beyond the fact that the Homeric and Bosniac epics, on the one hand, and the Bedouin poems, on the other hand, are all species of oral poetry, they also share an affinity for the formulaic and conventional that renders them relatively close to one another in the larger genus of oral poetry (on this genus, see Foley [2002: 22–57]). Just as the epic poets do, the poets Kurpershoek recorded rely heavily on "a common store of themes, motives, stock images, phraseology and prosodical options" (1994: 57 [see his 23–62] and cf. Palva [1989–1990: 116]). For examples of oral poets who by contrast aim to avoid saying the sorts of things their peers say, see Solomon (1994: 398) on song duels in Bolivia and Aulestia (1995: 15 and 33) on Basque improvisational poets working

Dealing with this material requires four degrees of distribution instead of three. Within the large tribal grouping known as the Dawasir, two branches concern us, the Al-Salem and the Sheib.[26] Each branch segments into subtribes: for our purposes, it will be sufficient to note that al-Makharim and ar-Rijban are subtribes of the Al-Salem branch and al-Misaʿrah is a subtribe of the Sheib branch. "Idiolect" retains its meaning, but the concept of dialect warrants further specifications. Genealogical divisions correlate to geographical divisions.[27] I call "dialectal" those elements shared among poets within either branch (Al-Salem and Sheib) of the Dawasir tribe. Broadening the perspective, I call "supra-dialectal" those elements shared among poets of both branches of the tribe. The term "pan-traditional" applies to elements shared among Dawasir poets and Bedouin poets from other tribes in Saudi Arabia, such as the Oteiba confederation, and/or Bedouin and non-Bedouin in other countries, such as Jordan.[28] Figure 1, provided at the end of this essay, schematizes these relationships and lists the subtribe to which each poet I cite belongs.

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in the genre known as bertsolaritza. (2) Is the comparison of epic to short "lyric"-like poems worthwhile? Foley advocates for a principle of "genre-dependence". Epics should be compared with other epics: "Many potentially fruitful comparisons have been to some extent qualified by drawing analogies between very different genres, such as between lyric (and non-narrative) panegyric and narrative epic" (1990: 8). I am sympathetic to this position, but in the present case I prefer for three reasons to follow the thinking of Jensen who in her own comparative efforts decides against "limiting myself to genres that may with more or less conviction be classified as epic" (1980: 17–22, quotation on 22). First, it is reasonable to compare not just how poets in the same genre A make use of the same device Y but also how poets operating in different genres, say A and C, make use of the same device Y. Second, Homeric poetry has a lot of similes. Najdi poetry, and vernacular Arabic poetry more broadly, abounds in similes, even extended similes. If we want to learn about what oral poets do with similes, we need to study oral poets who use a lot of similes, even if they are operating in a different genre. A third, related point: the comparatist interested in similes can consult individual simile-rich and properly textualized oral poems (see, e.g., Smith [1991] and Collins [1998]), but, apart from Parry, Lord, and Bynum's South Slavic collection and Kurpershoek's Najdi collection, he will be hard pressed to find thick corpora of multiple textualized oral poems that have similes in them, that are from the same time and place, and that were textualized in keeping with modern-day standards for such work. Kurpershoek's corpus demands attention because, if we want to learn about what oral poets do with similes, we should study as many simile-laden and correctly documented oral poems from the same time and place as we can.

On comparing the extended Homeric simile to the extended simile found in the classical Arabic ode, see Sells (1994: 153–154). For an enlightening comparison that crosses genres, see King (2007: 47–48) on the Mwindo epics and Athenian tragedy.

[26] On the Dawasir tribal structure, see Kurpershoek (2002: 76–83 and 951–958).

[27] See Kurpershoek (2002: 81–82).

[28] For vernacular poetry from Jordan, see Palva (1978) and (1992).

To trace the figurative spectrum of distribution in one of these poems, I look to an example from the corpus of Abdullah ad-Dindan (tribal grouping: Dawasir; branch: Al-Salem; subtribe: ar-Rijban). In a twenty-seven-line poem (see Kurpershoek [1994: 101–107]), Dindan uses five similes.[29] I provide one example for each category of the spectrum of distribution.

An idiolectal simile describes a she-camel's head: "Crowned by a head like a man who shouts warning cries on top of a knoll" (line 10).

A dialectal simile says of the she-camel, "Like a stud camel her imperious gaze ranges in all directions" (line 9). Only Falih ibn Betla, a contemporary of Dindan and another member of the Al-Salem branch (subtribe: al-Makharim) of the Dawasir, uses this simile: "She [a she-camel] holds her head like a stud-camel jealously watching his herd" (1999: 189, line 5).[30]

In the following supra-dialectal simile, men on horseback pursue those who stole their camels "like kites: pouncing, flying up and pouncing again" (line 16). The image appears in a poem composed by Zeid al-Khweir, a long-ago sheik of one of the subsections of al-Misaʿrah (a subtribe of the Sheib branch of the Dawasir), and transmitted by Dindan (see 1994: 19). Men on horseback attack "like kites swooping down" (1994: 201, line 6).[31]

Dindan also finds room for the pan-traditional: "From You I ask for a night decked with seamless clouds, // Like swarms of red Tihāmah locusts, coming in wave upon wave" (line 4). This popular simile vehicle is used to describe a large number in vernacular poetry throughout the Arab world. For instance, it appears in a poem performed by a transmitter, Mhammad al-ʿId al-Barari of the ʿAjarma tribe, in Jordan: "Thank God, my fellow tribesmen are not few; / In number they are like locusts of Tihāma" (Palva [1978: 85]).[32]

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[29] The material collected in Kurpershoek (1994) was recorded in the fall of 1989 (1994: ix and 3).

[30] Kurpershoek recorded this poem in March 1994 (see 1999: 187 n. 55).

[31] I am assuming that Dindan was not the only one who knew this poem, that his contemporaries in the Sheib branch of his tribe must have known it as well. Kurpershoek notes that a shorter version of the poem was published in 1989 (see 1994: 198 n. 83).

[32] Palva recorded the material in his 1978 publication in 1970. The poem from which this verse comes is attributed to an unnamed, early twentieth-century poet of the Shararat tribe: "Tribespeople who uniquely did not possess their own *dira* [domain] but were affiliated with other tribes, roaming both sides of the Transjordanian-Najdi frontier and engaged in raids with Transjordanian tribes" (Alon [2007: 164]; see also Palva [1992: 46 n. 63]). Cf. "And the next thing they knew, horsemen, like swarms of locusts fell upon

This type of analysis can be replicated using others of these Najdi poems as well as the epic poetry of other Bosniac singers. That work suggests the following: within the span of a single poem, a poet strives to produce unique similes but also to use similes that others use too. Now, the figurative spectrum of distribution is a microcosm of the larger spectrum of distribution. If we can establish why a poet moves around on the spectrum of distribution, we shall be most of the way toward explaining why he moves around on the figurative spectrum of distribution. So, why range across the spectrum of distribution? The research of folklorists and ethnographers shows that by presenting both idiolectal and shared material a poet reveals his performative competence to an audience. One can glean this principle from a careful reading of scholarship on Bosniac and vernacular Arabic poetry, but in order to demonstrate its diffusion I focus on three other sources.[33]

Investigators detect the duality we are seeking in performances of the Egyptian oral epic *Sîrat Banî Hilâl*. On the one hand, Susan Slyomovics observes, "[I]ndividual variations, playful elaborations, and musical virtuosity are appreciated and sought out by both patrons and listeners" (1987: 18).[34] On the other hand, as Bridget Connelly notes, "Poets aim for lots of flowers (zahr, puns) in their rhymes" (1986: 106) because the audience expects the good poet to pun his rhymes (see 106–107, 138, and 253). Many of these puns are shared among poets (see 112–113, 124–125, 160, and 262; cf. 136).[35]

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them" (Kurpershoek [1995: 223]) from a poem by Bakhit ibn Maʿiz, a nineteenth-century poet of the Oteiba confederation (see 1995: 56). Khaled ibn Shleiweyh, a great-grand nephew of Bakhit, served as transmitter (see 1995: 28–54). The material collected in Kurpershoek (1995) was recorded in 1989 (see 1995: 26).

[33] Whereas it is easy to learn about the value of shared material from Lord's (see, e.g., 1954: 242–243) and Kurpershoek's (see below) studies, it is a bit more challenging to find either of them discussing the importance of the idiolectal. Yet, as regards Bosniac singers at least, note Čolaković's comment: "Post-traditional singers introduce new themes, new motifs, and new diction into their poems, neither learned nor ever heard from other singers, but 'from my own head,' 'from my own heart,' 'from within myself' (Međedović)" (2008a: 377) (*contra* Jensen [1980: 68]). There is no need to describe Međedović as "post-traditional" (see Elmer [2010]).

[34] Cf. Reynolds (1995: 128, 135, and 184). On the need to show one's musical skill, see Connelly (1986: 59 and 70).

[35] Connelly writes, "The oral poet's art is one that eschews originality and individuality," and testimony from a listener makes it clear that "the poet cannot do whatever he wants" (1986: 56 and 64, respectively; cf. 75). Slyomovics writes, "[S]ince the epic and its plot lines are known to all, the poet, as he is seen by his listeners, is thought only to hand

For Evans, "a successful blues singer must have considerable variety in his repertoire" (1982: 164). On the one hand, the idiolectal makes an important contribution. These components can "personalize" a song, imparting "a feeling of originality … highly valued among both performers and audiences" (219 and 165, respectively).[36] On the other hand, shared lyrics are appreciated as well. One finds "the very familiarity of the phrases … making them pleasurably easy to recognize and identify with" (Evans n.d. quoted in Taft 2006: 306).[37] Taft discusses the importance of the blues formula's connection to "everyday African American speech" (2006: 308):

> But it is the blues, perhaps more than any other form of African American literature, that so clearly evokes ordinary discourse. Bluesman J.D. Short spoke to this point: "What I think about what made the blues really good is when a fellow writes a blues and then writes it with a feeling, with great harmony, and there's so many true words in the blues, of things that have happened to so many people, and that's why it makes the feeling in the blues" (Charters [1963: 12]). Truth and harmony, as Short said, are what make the blues "really good." Not the truth of personal experience but the truth of shared experience expressed in the shared discourse of singer and audience. … [T]he formula expressed this truth. (2006: 310)

By using the conventional and formulaic, the singer creates a good song.

Similarly, Nadia Yaqub's (2007) analysis reveals the productive tension that encourages singers who engage in verbal dueling at Palestinian weddings to demonstrate their competence in performance by presenting both idiolectal and shared material. On the one hand, poets strive to generate "the innovative turns that audiences remember and repeat at other times" (12). Indeed, "[p]eople remember and are able to recite the *bons mots* or startling images that might emerge from this discursive mode of composition" (22). The poet's goal of producing unique material is reflected in the fact that "one of the worst things one can say about a poet is to claim that he recited in performance the lines of other poets" (91) as well as in one of Yaqub's informant's assertions: "Most improvised poetry is formulaic and uninteresting, he says, but the trading of lines in

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on a familiar, monolithic history, perhaps embellishing it as it momentarily rests within his possession. … Both the audience and the poet see the poet as the bearer of tradition, not as an individual creative artist" (1987: 19).

36 See also Evans (1982: 201).

37 Cf. "The traditional stanzas, which make up the great bulk of nonthematic blues, have been known to incite many reactions in people, but perhaps the most common one in their normal performance context is laughter" (Evans [1982: 165]).

the context of a poetry duel can inspire a poet and lead him toward an original image or turn of phrase" (92). On the other hand, the poet relies heavily on traditional formulas and conventional material: "repetition, formulaic phrases, and at times even rhymed and metered nonsense" characterize a good deal of the performance (22); "many of the lines and images … are formulaic and can be heard at other performances" (163). For example, Yaqub draws attention to the routine acts of metaphoric labeling:

> At nearly every performance the host will, at some point, be described as Hātim al-Tā'ī [an icon of generosity], and the poet will invariably label himself and/or audience members ʿAntarah, equating participation in the poetic performance with the heroic acts of the great pre-Islamic warrior. (127)

Similarly, from one performance to the next, different poets present overlapping lists of culturally and politically significant figures (see 128–130). An essential characteristic of the verbal duel therefore is that "poets vie with each other to demonstrate their grasp of traditional poetic forms and the conventional wisdom … that is shared by members of the community to whom the performance is directed" (176).

Moving around on the spectrum of distribution shows a performer's competence. I stress again the contribution of material on the shared side of the spectrum to this demonstration. Kurpershoek observes the importance of the traditional or conventional among the Najdi poets of Saudi Arabia. The audience likes hearing what it has heard before: "these poets avail themselves of the conventional repertory and the modular technique because in their situation these are the materials and tools most suited to the process of oral composition and *the achievement of the desired impression on the audience during performance*" (1994: 28, my emphasis).[38] The deployment of formulas and other shared materials by storytellers working in prose, as it were, highlights the fact that verbal artists use such elements not simply for the sake of ease of composition. Sabir Badalkhan considers how storytellers in Balochistan turn to shared formulas at key moments, such as at the beginning or end of a tale and at episodic junctures (see 2001: 171–178): "every storyteller tries his best to

[38] Note Reichl's judgment of the intent behind the delivery of certain passages in a Karakalpak epic: "the singer speaks the lines fairly quickly and almost without expression, like someone who has learned a poem by heart and rattles it off *to show that he knows it*. This is especially true of the performance of repeated lines like the list of Tokhtamysh's court officials" (2007: 166, my emphasis).

employ more and more of these phrases to make his tales more colourful and entertaining" (171); after all, these formulas "never fail to draw the attention of the listeners" (173).

In sum, previous scholarship on verbal art suggests that a performer demonstrates competence by modulating between the idiolectal and the shared. We are also reminded that in many cases an audience pays close attention to the performer's use of standard and formulaic materials: the shared is not merely the backdrop against which the idiolectal stands out but is valuable in itself as a marker of skill.

To return to similes: traversing the figurative spectrum of distribution is one tactic a poet can adopt when he wishes to prove his ability to move around on the spectrum of distribution writ large. What is more, it is an especially effective means of doing so given that similes attract attention.[39] It is to be concluded that performers make an effort to range across the figurative spectrum of distribution because it is an easy or noticeable way to show off.

I.3. *The Construction of Idiolectal Similes*

Modern-day oral poetries exhibit a figurative spectrum of distribution, and research on modern-day traditions of oral performance suggests why a poet might choose to present material that falls at various points on that spectrum. The Bosniac and Nadji poetry also draws our attention to a second, but related, feature of similes. I pass over the important point that shared similes usually comprise a vehicle that is paired with its customary tenor. I concentrate here on the tenor when it comes to idiolectal similes.

A poet will alternate between two different kinds of idiolectal similes. The entity that is the tenor of an idiolectal simile may appear elsewhere in a poem by another poet but not as the tenor of a simile: an idiolectal simile can consist of an unparalleled tenor and an unparalleled vehicle. At other times, the entity that is a tenor of an idiolectal simile appears elsewhere in a poem by another poet as the tenor of a simile: an idiolectal simile, that is, can also consist of a paralleled tenor and an unparalleled

[39] For examples of an oral poet's audience laughing approvingly at a simile, see Slyomovics (1987: 92–93) and Caton (1990: 96). Going much further afield, I point to a carving on a rock face of the narrative of Sennacherib's Fifth Expedition, which took place at some point between 699 and 697 BCE. Although working in such a difficult medium "would surely have encouraged the scribes to be concise, not one of the similes is omitted" (Richardson [1989: 474]). One reason for including the similes has to have been that audiences noticed and appreciated them.

vehicle. I provide one example of each of these phenomena from the Bosniac and Najdi materials.

In his monumental *The Wedding of Smailagić Meho*, Avdo Međedović deploys both modes. The following idiolectal simile is composed of an unparalleled tenor and an unparalleled vehicle: "His [Meho's] coat was all torn and it hung from him like a wolf's skin" (PN 6840. Lord [1974: 227]; Bynum and Lord [1974: 350, lines 11054–11055]). It is a common move to take note of a warrior's ripped clothing after a battle, but no other poet uses it as the tenor of a simile. Murat Žunić, for example, says of the returning Bey Omerbey, "His clothes were all in tatters, / torn apart by flying lead" (PN 1930. Bynum [1993: 221–223, lines 1720–1721; original language text on facing pages]).

Another of Međedović's idiolectal similes in that poem uses a paralleled tenor and an unparalleled vehicle: "The yellow necklaces fell over their white breasts, the colors contrasting with one another so that one would say they were lovely oranges from the sea coast" (PN 6840. Lord [1974: 113]; Bynum and Lord [1974: 125, lines 2488–2490]). Murat Žunić too makes necklaces a tenor, in this case first of a simile then of a metaphor:

> The ruddy coral lay upon her lustrous skin
> beneath her raven tresses
> just like gobs of blood on snow caressed by Eurus' breeze.
> Her third necklace was entirely made of soft gold ducats,
> and it hung suspended [as] a lover does around about his darling's neck.
> (PN 1940. Bynum [1993: 276, lines 1100–1104];
> Bynum [1979: 294, lines 1100–1104])[40]

The Najdi poet Abdullah ad-Dindan also varies the components of his idiolectal similes. He can generate a simile made up not only of a new vehicle but also of a tenor that is not found in a simile elsewhere. Take, for instance, the following image about storm clouds: "The pitch black colour in the brow of its thunderheads // Is like a figure sieving the water in compassion for the thirsty" (1994: 157, line 8). We come across references to storm clouds in others of Kurpershoek's poems, but in no other instance do they serve as the tenor of a simile. For example, Falih ibn Betla declaims: "I ask Him for clouds at night, lit up by lightning's flashes, / Clouds replete with moisture driven by His order from their place of origin" (1999: 153, line 18).[41]

[40] This poem was dictated to Vujnović on April 1–2, 1935.
[41] Kurpershoek recorded this poem in December 1989 (see 1999: 141 n. 3).

Others of Dindan's idiolectal similes join a tenor elsewhere used in a simile to an unparalleled vehicle. Toward the start of one poem, the narrator describes his anguish: "My lament is like that of an orphan beaten by his uncles" (1994: 135, line 4). The introductory formula (*wanniti wannat*) translated by Kurpershoek as "My lament is" appears in similes in other poems as well (see Kurpershoek [1994: 43]). For instance, Nabit ibn Zafir, a competitor of Dindan, states, "I am wailing (*wanniti wannat*) like one who fell down and broke his bones, / Or as if I were deranged and known as the tribe's idiot" (1999: 251, line 7).[42]

The impact of an idiolectal simile resides not just in the presentation of an unparalleled vehicle. A simile must be understood as a two-part equation in which the tenor matters as well. In the first case (unparalleled tenor, unparalleled vehicle), the poet offers an entirely idiolectal statement and thereby emphatically asserts his ability to operate at that end of the figurative spectrum of distribution. In the second case (paralleled tenor, unparalleled vehicle), the audience finds its expectations partially met: that which has been a tenor before is a tenor yet again. The poet shows his ability to do what other poets do. At the same time, the fact that the audience has heard similes involving this tenor before but hears this precise figurative equation only from this poet enhances the idiolectal feel of the vehicle portion. Idiolect similes constructed in this second way find the poet moving around on the figurative spectrum of distribution in such a conspicuous manner that it is easy for the audience to see that he is doing so. In short, a poet alternates between these two different kinds of idiolectal similes depending in part on which stance he wishes to adopt as regards the figurative spectrum of distribution.

Part II. *Application to Homer*

What comes of applying to the Homeric simile the analytical methods deployed above?[43] Absent other epic poems contemporaneous with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, we inevitably enter into the realm of speculation.

[42] The poet is a member of the Dawasir tribe (branch: Al-Salem; subtribe: al-Makharim); on his relationship to Dindan, see Kurpershoek (1999: 63–66). Kurpershoek recorded the poet in March 1994 (see 1999: 247 n. 155).

[43] In what follows, all translations from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are taken with the rare modification from Lattimore (1951 and 1965, respectively). All Greek quotations come from the Oxford Classical Texts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Nonetheless, in spite of our inability to provide definitive answers, the proposed thought experiment will teach us a couple of things about how and to what ends Homer composed his similes.

II.1. *The Figurative Spectrum of Distribution and Competence in Performance*

Our first hypothesis is that within a single poem Homer used similes that fall at various points on a figurative spectrum of distribution in order to show his competence as a performer.[44] (In this section, I employ the word "simile" to mean the vehicle portion of the simile in keeping with Homeric scholarship's usual, albeit imprecise, practice.)

If the comparative material is any guide, Homer must have used idiolectal similes. Unfortunately, we can never be sure that a specific simile is idiolectal,[45] and we have to content ourselves with the most rudimentary mechanism for labeling a simile idiolectal: namely, if it occurs only once in the preserved epics and if it is absent from the Homeric Hymns and from the works of Hesiod and the lyric poets. Such a simile may be that appearing in *Il.* 21.257–264: the Skamandros river overtakes a fleeing Achilleus just as water in an irrigation ditch scoots past a farmer.

For one who wishes to make the argument that Homer moved around on a figurative spectrum of distribution, however, the real challenge arises elsewhere: one needs to demonstrate the extent of Homer's reliance on shared similes.[46] Verbatim repetition is easiest to take note of. We can declare "shared" a short simile appearing in both the Homeric poems and in the poems of Hesiod or in the Homeric Hymns or even in another genre of archaic poetry.[47] The eight extended similes repeated verbatim

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[44] Minchin (see 2001: 223–224) and Scott (see 2009: 31; cf. 44) are two Homerists who have noted the connection between similes and a demonstration of skill.

[45] See Moulton (1974: 381) and Scott (1974: 84); cf. Ford (1992: 8).

[46] I see no way of determining whether a Homeric simile is dialectal or pan-traditional—hence, the use of the overarching term "shared". As Taplin notes, "Very few are set in a particular locality, scarcely any in a particular era; and remarkably few are specific to any particular culture" (2000: 46). Cf. Foley on Hermes' epithet "mighty slayer of Argus" as "a dialectal reflex … and possibly a pantraditional usage" (1995: 157).

The term "shared", as I am using it, differs from its application in scholarship on Homeric similes. The simile "and they whirled and fought like / wolves" (*Il.* 11.72–73) compares the Trojans and Achaians to the same vehicle within the space of one simile. This type of simile can be referred to as "shared": both tenors "share" the same vehicle. See Scott (2006: 108).

[47] As an example of that last sort of intersection, I cite the following. Teukros runs for

within the Homeric epics most probably qualify as well.[48] Both Paris and Hektor, for instance, are compared to a horse running free on a plain (*Il.* 6.506–511 and 15.263–268). In order to make something of these sorts of duplicate images, we must remember that the word-for-word repetition of a run of two or more lines is "one of the characteristic signs of oral style" (Lord [2000: 58])[49]—in other words, this is something oral poets do—and, accordingly, that neither of such duplicates is an interpolation.[50] We can then move on to consider whether those similes are shared or are idiolectal creations of the poet that he really liked.[51] Following Maurice Bowra (1952: 279) and William Scott (2009: 15) and in keeping with Carlo Pavese's suggestion that most repeated material is traditional (2003: 28–30), I prefer the former of those two options.

Next, in continuing our pursuit of Homer's shared extended similes, let us consider those not repeated verbatim, bearing in mind the fact mentioned toward the start of section I.1: for many oral poets and their audiences, two passages, say, need not be verbatim the same to be considered the same. I wish to approach this matter by way of Scott's 2009 reconsideration of the extended Homeric simile. He writes, "If the form and usage of similes developed over a long period, it is surprising that there are only seven identically repeated extended similes in the two poems, but this number rises significantly if one considers repetitions at a level deeper than the verbal expression" (2009: 28). To do so, Scott refines the concept of the simile family, an etic construct with which he worked in his 1974 publication. Similes about a given vehicle belong to a family: there is a lion simile family, a bird simile family, etc. The heuristic device of the "simileme" allows one to be more precise about the genetic makeup of a simile family: "I have chosen the term 'simileme' to represent the basic objects and actions that comprise each traditional simile family" (2009: 25). Scott suggests that each simile derives from a

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the cover of Aias' shield "like a child to the arms of his mother" (πάϊς ὣς ὑπὸ μητέρα) (*Il.* 8.271). A fragment to be attributed either to Sappho or to Alkaios says, "I have flown (to you?) as a child to its mother" (ὡς δὲ πάις πεδὰ μάτερα πεπτερύγωμαι) (frag. 25 Campbell [pp. 452–453], his translation).

48 Scott (see 1974: 129–130) and Edwards (see 1991: 24 n. 29) list the eight. Each simile is repeated once, and in one pairing (*Il.* 11.548–555 and 17.657–664) the first two lines differ slightly.

49 See also Hainsworth (1993: 20).

50 For the rejection of Aristarchus' interpolation hypothesis when it comes to the example involving Paris and Hektor, see Kirk (1990: ad 6.506–511), Janko (1992: ad 15.263–268), and Scott (2009: 26).

51 Cf. Fenik (1968: 42).

simileme: a simileme is "the mental structure underlying each simile," the simile's "nonverbal background material" (19). For example, Scott discerns a deep structure that underlies the several tree similes in the epics (see 22–23): species, locale, action, agent or force, tool, and purpose of action. In generating a tree simile, the poet chose from and worked within these categories of the tree simileme. Scott goes on to posit similemes involving the following additional subjects: fire, lion and boar, god, wind and wave, bird, and insect. Each simileme was known to all poets and experienced audience members.

Scott rightly seeks to get at the elemental components behind similes and rightly contends that Homer and others of his fellow poets knew these components. I depart from Scott in my understanding not only of the nature and content of those components but also of the status of the similes based on them.

Two observations should be made about extended Homeric similes. Elizabeth Minchin draws attention to one of them: "The majority of Homer's similes are extended by narrative in the form of a story or story fragment" (2001: 150). Similes involve actors acting and being acted upon over a span of time, however brief. Attending to this story element is critical to an appreciation of what it was that the apprentice poet learned. I suggest that the poet learned not that there are certain entities to which one can compare a warrior, for example, but that there are certain entities doing certain things to which one can compare a warrior. The poet was not told, "You can compare a warrior to a lion." He was told, "You can compare a warrior to a lion who eats a domesticated animal." In performance, then, the poet did not think, "Here would be a good place for a lion simile"; he thought, "Here would be a good place for a simile about a lion who eats a domesticated animal." The irreducible component lying at the heart of a simile is the scenario in which the vehicle finds itself. Scott posits a two-step process (see 2009: esp., 177–180). He imagines that the poet first decided upon the subject matter of his simile: tree, lion, bird, etc. The poet then turned to the simileme for that vehicle and chose among its categories in order to fashion a simile appropriate to the context. By contrast, I propose that what sprang to mind when the poet decided to use a simile was some number of vehicles doing things. What we would like to know, in short, is which vehicles doing which actions his teachers and peers taught the aspiring poet to use.[52]

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[52] In his discussion of extended similes, Kurpershoek also divides up the material in terms of scenarios (see 1994: 42–56): e.g., "the labourer and his camel that draw water

We should also keep a second observation in mind when evaluating the similes in the Homeric epics. Certain features appear in similes about a given vehicle in a given scenario (let us call it A). Those features differ from the features that appear in similes about that same vehicle in a different scenario (let us call it B). We can surmise that the poet learned to mention particular things when speaking of a vehicle engaged in scenario A, things that were different from those he introduced when he had the same vehicle engage in scenario B. This distribution of features also makes plain that the poet did not have just one template for generating similes about a given vehicle. For if some items attach to a unit A and other items attach to a unit B, A and B will be distinct. The poet maintained as discrete entities in his mind scenarios A and B (and, often enough, C), the different options for what he could do with a particular vehicle. By contrast, Scott suggests that the simileme for a given vehicle lies behind all the possible similes about that subject: there is one master simileme from which, for example, all the insect similes derive and one simileme from which all the lion similes derive.

So, the poet knew two or more different narrative scenarios for each of his vehicles and which features he could introduce into a simile based on one of those scenarios. Others of his fellow poets also knew and made use of the scenarios and their attendant features, and his audiences expected him to present similes stemming from this material when he performed. At this point, we come to the heart of the matter. We may be content with the following: when Homer derived a simile from one of these scenarios, he displayed his knowledge of shared material. But if we are going to take seriously the conception of the "same" that is shared by many oral poets and their audiences, I suggest one additional step: when Homer derived a simile from one of these scenarios, the resulting simile was considered not only as a display of the poet's knowledge of shared material but also as the same as those that other poets crafted based on that scenario. It is here, accordingly, that we can look for further evidence for Homer's shared extended similes beyond the eight extended similes repeated verbatim. Despite its overall similarity to my model of discrete scenarios, Scott's simileme model does not allow one to take this position. On the contrary, Scott heads in the opposite direction and, in keeping with scholarly orthodoxy, stresses the distinctiveness of the poet's similes: "Any simile so produced is a unique and complex creation of the poet's

from the well" (43); "the pain and terror felt by a man who has fractured a bone on a raid or journey, or by one wounded in war and abandoned in the desert" (54).

imagination" (2009: 29). In support of my claims, I look first to the similes in the *Iliad* about insects and then at greater length to some lion similes in the *Iliad*.

When it comes to insects, two scenarios emerge. (1) Insects fly about. Three similes (*Il.* 2.87–90, 2.469–472, and 16.641–643) employ this scenario and reveal the features that attend it. The first feature is the springtime setting.[53] The same verse appears at 2.471 and 16.643: ὥρῃ ἐν εἰαρινῇ, ὅτε τε γλάγος ἄγγεα δεύει (in the season of spring when the milk splashes in the milk pails). At 2.89, reference is made to "the flowers in springtime" (*anthesin eiarinoisin*). Note that two of the similes also share the spatial setting of the *stathmos* (see 2.470 and 16.642). The second feature of this scenario is its concentration on the number of insects. In 2.87–90, the bees "issue forever in fresh bursts" (αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχομενάων) and are "like bunched grapes" (*botrudon*). The simile at 2.469–471 speaks of "multitudinous nations of swarms of insects" (μυιάων ἁδινάων ἔθνεα πολλά). Finally, the verb *bromeôsi* ("thunder") at 16.642 points to the great number of flies that swarms around the milk pails. An additional detail is shared between two of the similes: at 2.87 and 2.469 the insects are said to be "thronging" (*hadinaôn*). One remembers, however, that this adjective can have a sonic resonance: Achilleus leads the "loud" (*hadinou*) lament for Patroklos (*Il.* 18.316); Odysseus recounts the "loud" (*hadinaôn*) singing of the Sirens (*Od.* 23.326). If that resonance is felt at 2.87 and 2.469, then those two similes join the one at 16.641–643 in pointing to the noise the insects generate (see again *bromeôsi* ["thunder"] at 16.642). That would make for a third feature of this scenario.

[53] Beyond the five examined in this and the next paragraph, the epics contain one more simile involving insects. At *Od.* 22.299–302, the suitors are said to resemble a herd of cows (*boes … agelaiai*) that a gadfly "sets upon and drives wild / in the spring season at the time when the days grow longer" (ἐφορμηθεὶς ἐδόνησεν / ὥρῃ ἐν εἰαρινῇ, ὅτε τ' ἤματα μακρὰ πέλονται) (trans. Lattimore [adapted]). I disagree with Scott's proposal to group and examine this simile along with the other five "because the phrase 'in the springtime' [22.302] points to a common category in the insect simileme" (2009: 205). Verse 302 reappears at *Od.* 18.367, which is not in a simile: that is, "springtime" is not a concept limited to similes. If we restrict our search to similes, we find the season mentioned in the simile likening Gorgythion's head to the head of a poppy weighed down by springtime (*eiarinêisin*) rains (*Il.* 8.306–308): that is, even within similes "springtime" is not limited to those involving insects. "Springtime", then, is a necessary feature of insect similes belonging to scenario 1 but is not exclusively found in those similes. That the simile in *Odyssey* 22 takes place in the spring is not reason enough to connect it with other insect similes. Rather, it may be a parodic riff on a component found in lion similes: at *Il.* 11.172–176, a lion puts cows to flight (*ephobêse*); at *Il.* 15.323–325, two beasts (*thêre*, most likely lions) drive into confusion (*klonôsi*) either a herd (*agelên*) of cows or a flock of sheep.

(2) Insects fly about as they attack men. This scenario, manifested in two similes (*Il.* 12.167–170 and 16.259–265), does not exhibit the features found in scenario 1 but rather has two distinctive features of its own. The insects have "homes" right off a main road—οἰκία … ὁδῷ ἔπι (12.168) and ὁδῷ ἔπι οἰκί' (16.261)—and seek to defend their "children"—ἀμύνονται περὶ τέκνων (12.170) and ἀμύνει οἷσι τέκεσσι (16.265).[54]

I turn now to a lengthier examination of not all the lion similes in the *Iliad* but the several about a lion attacking domesticated livestock. Three different scenarios emerge that were most probably held in common by many Homeric poets: (1) lion attacks unguarded flocks; (2) lion raids a farm; (3) lion feasts. To repeat, these three scenarios do not account for all the things lions do in similes: see, for example, *Il.* 16.756–761 wherein two lions fight over a dead deer. My aim, however, is tease out from the available evidence some of the discrete lion scenarios that poets knew and to do so with similes that are often conflated.

(1) In the first scenario, a lion attacks livestock that are not protected by a shepherd. At *Il.* 10.485–487, the flock is unguarded: "the helpless herds unshepherded" (*mêloisin asêmantoisin*). At *Il.* 15.323–326, "no herdsman is by" (σημάντορος οὐ παρεόντος).

(2) A second discrete scenario, in turn divided into three sub-scenarios, finds a lion raiding a farm, signified variously by *aulê*, *domos*, *messaulos*, or *stathmos*. First, these passages can unfold according to a "kill *or* be killed" sub-scenario. In the simile at *Il.* 5.136–143, the shepherd grazes the lion as he jumps into the fold (*aulês*), thereby increasing his fury all the more as the lion devastates a flock of sheep. At *Il.* 12.299–308, the lion seems to meet stiffer resistance when he attacks the *domos* and *stathmos*: "and either makes his spring and seizes a sheep, or else / himself is hit in the first attack by a spear from a swift hand / thrown." Second, we discern a "kill *and* be killed" sub-scenario. At *Il.* 5.554–560, although successful for a time at snatching cows and sheep and laying waste to the folds (*stathmous*), the lions are eventually "killed under the cutting bronze in the men's hands", that is, by the flock's defenders. At *Il.* 16.752–754, the herdsmen kill the intruder as well: we are told that Patroklos has "the spring of a lion, who as he ravages the folds (*stathmous*) / has been hit in the chest, and his own courage

[54] Cf. Muellner (1990: 68).

destroys him". A third sub-scenario finds the lion, driven away by the herdsmen and guard dogs, fail in his attack on a *messaulos* (see *Il.* 11.548–557, 17.109–113, and 17.657–666).[55]

(3) A third scenario is revealed by four similes (*Il.* 5.161–164, 11.172–178, 15.630–638, and 17.61–69) as well as by the scene on Achilleus' shield depicting a lion attack (*Il.* 18.579–586), which I treat as an honorary vehicle portion.[56] These passages draw attention to the lion's feast. The tamest description occurs at 15.630–638 wherein the lion merely eats the ox: *boun edei*. At 5.161–164, the lion "leaps on the neck of an ox or / heifer …, and breaks it." The similes at 11.172–178 and 17.61–69 deploy the same run of two lines in fleshing out what comes next: "First the lion breaks her neck caught fast in the strong teeth, / then gulps down the blood and all the guts that are inward." Just so, in the description on the shield, the lions first tear the bull's hide and then devour its insides: "But the two lions, breaking open the hide of the great ox, / gulped down the black blood and inward guts" (18.582–583). The reference to and/or description of the lion's actual eating distinguish this scenario from scenarios 1 and 2. Similes belonging to scenario 2 make only vague mention of the lion's slaughter (see *Il.* 5.141) or "snatching" (see *harpazonte* and *hêrpaxe* at *Il.* 5.556 and 12.305, respectively).

Two features are peculiar to similes in this third group. First, four of these similes (*Il.* 5.161–164, 15.630–638, 17.61–69 and 18.579–586) are the only lion similes to refer to the predator attacking a herd of grazing animals. Second, in three of these similes, the poet depicts the utter inefficacy of the flock's defenders. In the simile at *Il.* 15.630–638, a young herdsman fails to anticipate the lion's attack on the middle of his herd. In two other images (*Il.* 17.61–69 and 18.579–586), the herdsmen and their dogs do not launch any missiles or land any blows of their own, and they can only watch as the lion eats one of their livestock. Scenario 1 by definition does not allow for a defender to be on the scene; that is, efficacy is not at issue. Conversely, even the least effective defender in a simile stemming from scenario 2 (*Il.* 5.136–143) manages to land a blow.

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[55] Again, the similes found in 11.548–557 and 17.657–666 are word-for-word the same apart from some minor differences in the first two lines.

[56] On including the passage from Achilleus' shield in a study of lion similes, see Alden (2000: 67–70) and Tsagalis (2008: 158–159).

To be sure, a detail found in a simile that comes from one of the three scenarios posited here can appear in a simile that comes from another one of those scenarios. For instance, the ineffective defenders in scenario 3 make a great deal of noise: see *iuzousin* ("raise a commotion") and *hulakteon* ("bayed") (*Il.* 17.66 and 18.586, respectively). The herdsmen who ward off the lion from the *messaulos* in one of the examples from scenario 2 do the same: see ἔγχεσι καὶ φωνῇ ("with weapons / and shouts") (*Il.* 17.111). Moreover, my analysis has addressed similes describing forays launched by a lion against domesticated livestock, but some details found in those similes also appear in lion similes that involve the animal in other activities. For example, mention of the lion's hunger is not limited to the similes I have examined: compare *peinaôn* ("hungry") (*Il.* 3.25 [a lion comes upon a dead deer]) and *peinaonte* (*Il.* 16.758 [two lions fight over a dead deer]) in two similes not discussed above with ἐπιδευὴς / δηρὸν ἔῃ κρειῶν ("for a long time / has gone lacking meat") (*Il.* 12.299–300) and *kreiôn eratizôn* ("in his hunger for meat") (*Il.* 11.551 = 17.660), both of which are in passages based on scenario 2. Nonetheless, neither species of overlap discussed in this paragraph lessens the distinctiveness of the three scenarios outlined above.

Let these discrete insect and lion scenarios exemplify the model of separate scenarios in which a given vehicle engages. This model allows one to imagine that the things Homer was doing in his extended similes were things done by other poets too. It is much easier to conceive of Homer's extended similes as shared if we break them down at the level of detail I am proposing. Poets crafted similes based on commonly known and quite specific scenarios (and sub-scenarios: see lion scenario 2 above), and every simile that a poet fashioned based on one of these scenarios was thought of as the same as the similes that other poets fashioned based on that scenario. Homer's were no exception. Certainly, the poet may have introduced idiolectal components into a rendition of a given scenario.[57] Yet, to concentrate on that possibility can cause one to neglect the likelihood that Homer the oral poet desired to replicate what others were doing. Analogously, to fixate on the variation between similes descended from the same scenario can cause one to neglect the likelihood that Homer the oral poet had, to our mind, a looser conception of what constitutes the "same".

[57] Cf. Kurpershoek (1994: 35 and 60).

The predominant and unchanged view of Homeric similes over the last decades holds that the poet aimed by way of his similes to display his originality.[58] My analysis suggests that, although the poet may have used some similes toward that end, he used many others to demonstrate that he could generate similes like those being generated by other poets operating in his genre. Homer ranged over the entire figurative spectrum of distribution when he performed, and we are entitled to the idea that, like modern-day oral poets, he did so for the purpose of displaying his competence as a performer.

II.2. *The Construction of Idiolectal Similes*

At the start of section II.1, I designated some of Homer's similes as idiolectal. Operating under the assumption that these similes are indeed idiolectal, I shall briefly delve a bit more deeply into their construction. In attempting to pinpoint the individual creativity discernible in the Homeric poet's similes, scholars often make two interpretative moves. The vehicle portion is considered as the site of originality, and it is assumed that the tenor involved is not usually a part of a simile.[59] Inspired by what we found in the Bosniac and Najdi materials, I take a different approach. We should attend to how, over the course of a single poem, Homer at one time applies an unparalleled vehicle to a phenomenon that *has not* before been used as a tenor and at another time applies an unparalleled vehicle to a phenomenon that *has* before served as a tenor.

I cite two examples of the first sort of pairing. (1) Hit by an arrow, Menelaos bleeds profusely. The dark blood flowing from the wound and staining nearly the entirety of Menelaos' legs reminds the poet of when a woman dyes a cheek piece for a horse, that is, stains the whole thing with purple dye (*Il.* 4.140–147). Much blood naturally flows from wounds in the *Iliad* (see, e.g., *Il.* 5.870 and 17.86), but only in the case of Menelaos' wound does blood flow serve as the tenor of a simile. (2) The speed with which Paieon, the divine physician, heals (*êkesat'*) Ares resembles the speed with which fig juice curdles milk: "in such speed as this he healed (*iêsato*) violent Ares" (*Il.* 5.900–904). There are other scenes of healing in the epics—Patroklos heals (*iat'*) Eurypylos (*Il.* 11.844–12.2);

[58] Edwards asserts that similes reveal the poet's unique genius because they are so varied and "untraditional" (see 1987: 102–103). Cf. Fowler (2004: 223), Danek (2006: 45 and 65), and Mueller (2009: 102).

[59] See Scott (1974: 85) and Stoevesandt (2004: 267).

Autolykos' children heal (*iêsamenoi*) Odysseus after he is wounded by a boar (*Od.* 19.455–461)—but never a simile at those moments. Both the idiolectal simile in *Iliad* 4 and the idiolectal simile in *Iliad* 5 join an unparalleled tenor to an unparalleled vehicle. With such similes, the poet emphatically stakes a claim to the idiolectal end of the figurative spectrum of distribution.

I offer two examples of the second sort of pairing. (1) Achilleus likens the crying Patroklos to a tearful girl who wants her mother to pick her up (*Il.* 16.7–11). Crying heroes appear as tenors of similes elsewhere. Indeed, immediately before Achilleus' comment, the narrator compares the weeping Patroklos to "a spring dark-running / that down the face of a rock impassable drips its dim water" (*Il.* 16.3–4). The same vehicle portion is used to describe the tearful Agamemnon when he decides that he can no longer prosecute the war (*Il.* 9.14–15). (2) When Iris departs Olympos to bring a message to Thetis, the narrator likens her to a piece of horn attached to a fishhook and thrown into the water (*Il.* 24.80–82). The figurative description of a god as he or she travels from one place to another is so common that Scott devotes a section to it in his study of similes found in particular type scenes (see 1974: 15–20). For example, Apollo resembles a hawk as he descends from Ida (*Il.* 15.237–238). Both Achilleus' idiolectal simile in *Iliad* 16 and the narrator's idiolectal simile in *Iliad* 24 are composed of a paralleled tenor and an unparalleled vehicle. When he employs this sort of a simile, the poet noticeably moves around on the figurative spectrum of distribution.

Conclusion

The vision I offer of the motives underlying Homer's compositional practices when it comes to similes can be briefly restated. When he sang of the heroic past, Homer traversed the figurative spectrum of distribution—that is, he generated both idiolectal and shared similes—so as to display to his audience his competence as a performer. As for those idiolectal similes, he modulated between similes that come down squarely on the idiolectal end of the spectrum of distribution and similes that swing from one end of the spectrum to the other. It is encounters with other traditions of oral performance that encourage and even enable us to consider these points.

Figure 1: Different degrees of **shared** material in Bedouin poetry and the tribes to which *poets* belong

Tribal grouping:	ad-Dawasir		Oteiba Confederation *Bakhit ibn Maʿiz*	ʿAjarma *Mhammad al-ʿId al-Barari**	(**Pan-traditional**)
Branch:	Al-Salem	Sheib			(**Supra-dialectal**)
Subtribe:	al-Makharim *Falih ibn Betla* *Nabit ibn Zafir* ar-Rijban *Abdullah ad-Dindan*	al-Misaʿrah *Zeid al-Khweir*			
	(**Dialectal**)				

(*transmitter)

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COMPOSING LINES, PERFORMING ACTS: CLAUSES, DISCOURSE ACTS, AND MELODIC UNITS IN A SOUTH SLAVIC EPIC SONG

Anna Bonifazi and David F. Elmer

Abstract

This article focuses on the analysis of a performance of the South Slavic epic song "Halil Hrnjičić and Miloš the Highwayman," recorded by Milman Parry in 1934. The investigation seeks to address the ways in which the singer articulates his song and marks narrative progress. What kind of segmentation is imposed by the *deseterac* (ten-syllable line)? What role does syntax play in the articulation of the narrative? What discourse features function as landmarks? What can the notions of 'discourse act' and 'performative act' add to an understanding of the performance as a communicative process? How is the linguistic component of the performance influenced by the non-linguistic component?

The resulting conclusions regarding continuity- and discontinuity-effects have potential implications for the study of Homeric epic, at least at the verbal level.

This article spotlights the discursive strategies employed by a Bosniac[1] singer named Alija Fjuljanin, whose epic song "Halil Hrnjičić and Miloš the Highwayman" was recorded by Milman Parry in 1934.[2] The song relates the kidnapping of a certain Hajkuna, sister of the Muslim heroes Mujo and Halil, by a Christian villain, and her subsequent rescue by Halil. By examining the techniques by which Fjuljanin segments his discourse and establishes the organizational contours of his song, we hope to gain

[1] The term "Bosniac" refers to a Muslim, Slavic-speaking inhabitant of the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In today's parlance, "Bosniac" refers to a cultural identity, "Bosnian" to a political one (i.e. a citizen of Bosnia-Herzegovina). Fjuljanin was ethnically Albanian, but spoke "Bosnian" (his label for the language spoken by the Slavic inhabitants of his region).

[2] Fjuljanin's performance of "Halil Hrnjičić i Miloš Keserdžija" was recorded on November 21, 1934, on 19 aluminum phonograph discs. The discs, along with a transcription by Parry's assistant Nikola Vujnović, are kept in the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature (housed in Widener Library, Room C, at Harvard University) under the catalogue number PN 662. Our transcriptions are based on those of Vujnović, but have been checked against the original recordings.

insights that will be applicable to a variety of oral narrative traditions, including the tradition of Homeric poetry, which Parry famously brought into comparison with South Slavic epic. Since the overall effect of the epic performance in question springs from the fusion of words and music, we will address both linguistic and non-linguistic ways of meaning, including the clauses that shape the syntactical organization of the narrative, the discourse acts that convey its sequential communicative steps, and, finally, the melodic units that constitute the building blocks of the tale as a song.

The argument is divided into five sections: first, some general remarks about the theory underlying the ideas presented here; second, a few notes on methodology; third, the application of theory and methodology to a few examples; fourth, discussion of some possible implications of such an approach for Homeric discourse; fifth, some conclusions.

I. *Theoretical Framework*

Performed oral narratives present unique challenges to researchers, not the least of which concerns methods for coming to terms with the internal organization of such narratives. Understanding a given narrative's structure—its organization into segments and units at various scales—is fundamental to our ability to interpret it. But for those who are used to the static conveniences of written texts—periods and paragraphs—detecting and interpreting the more flexible and ephemeral signs of narrative structure deployed by an oral medium can pose problems. These problems have especially exercised scholars working within the discipline of ethnopoetics, which stresses the need to remain faithful to emic or inherent criteria of organization while translating oral performance onto the page for documentation or analysis. Dell Hymes (1977: 431), for instance, examining structural patterns in Chinook narratives from the American Northwest, has discerned various levels of organization, proceeding from the single "line" at the smallest scale to the "verse", "stanza", "scene", and, at the largest scale, the "act". His editions of texts published in the 19th century as undifferentiated prose seek to clarify their meaning by exposing their structural articulation. The difficulties involved in such a project are considerable, however, especially in light of two considerations stressed by researchers: first, the means available to performers for the demarcation of narrative segments are not confined merely to verbal cues, that is, lexical items that might serve as "discourse markers" by

indicating boundaries between segments.[3] Rather, performers typically make use of a very wide variety of phenomena, including manipulations of the voice or of vocal melody (in the case of sung narratives), marked pauses, and even bodily gestures. In other words, discourse marking is an inherently multi-modal activity, involving linguistic, para-linguistic, and extra-linguistic features. Second, the various modes by which discourse boundaries are indicated sometimes reinforce each other, but they can often be at odds, creating expressive tensions that complicate efforts to describe a single, unambiguous organizational scheme.

The South Slavic epic tradition has a certain degree of built-in segmentation at the lowest level of organization, that of the individual line. The epics are composed entirely in decasyllabic lines that observe strict constraints: division into two *cola*, with an obligatory caesura after the fourth syllable, and a "bridge"—that is, avoidance of word break—between the 9th and 10th syllables. This recurring metrical pattern is reinforced both verbally and melodically. Verbally, there is a convergence of syntactic and metrical unit: generally speaking, one clause equals one decasyllabic line.[4] Moreover, particles that function as discourse markers are for the most part located exclusively in line-initial position. Melodically, the singer employs a vocal pattern that mirrors the 10-syllable pattern of the verbal line, and repeats this pattern or a variation on it with each subsequent verse, underscoring performatively the status of the line as the basic organizational unit.

We can thus observe at the level of the line the way a variety of features interact to produce a certain fundamental segmentation. However, still at the level of the line, we can also observe an impulse to moderate this fundamental segmentation by establishing a degree of continuity across subsequent lines. Once again, we can observe this impulse both verbally and musically. Verbally, the singer works to integrate old and

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[3] The linguistic and para-linguistic criteria that might be used in order to parse transcripts of oral narratives (including pause phrasing, prosodic phrasing, syntactic constituency, and adverbial-particle phrasing) have been explored by Woodbury (1987: 176–181). On the "multi-modality" of discourse-marking phenomena, and the complex interactions between different modes, see also Woodbury and Sherzer (1987: 3–5) and Sherzer (1987: 105). An earlier analysis of the complex relation between verbal particles, performative pauses, and narrative patterns is offered in Hymes (1980).

[4] This is true in a large majority of cases. However, we also find a variety of whole-line prepositional phrases or noun phrases (e.g., in the excerpts quoted here, ll. 342, 620, 621, 908, 909, 913, 914, 915). Syntactically, such whole-line phrases are expansions of a preceding clause, but, as we endeavor to show below, they also have their own, autonomous pragmatic and performative force.

new information as he proceeds through his narrative; the repetition of individual lexemes in adjacent lines stresses the "given" information as new information is added. Even more important is a strictly musical technique for stitching together lines, which Fjuljanin shares with many other singers in his tradition.[5] Although the metrical pattern of the words and the melodic pattern both emphasize the individual line as the basic unit of composition, there is an important discrepancy between them. From the point of view of the verbal line, the boundary between melodic units is displaced by one syllable. The melodic pattern ends after the ninth syllable of the line, and begins again with the tenth: that is, there is a melodic break at precisely that point where the metrical pattern forbids a verbal break. A brief example illustrates both of these techniques for establishing continuity:

e dones'te jedan kondil vina	619	bring up a vessel of wine
silna vina od sedam godina	620	a strong wine of seven years
eh u vinu svakojega bilja	621	and in the wine [put] all kinds of herbs[6]

[PN 662, disc 1098, 1:10–1:22]

On the recording, Fjuljanin inserts a distinct pause between the ninth syllables "vi", "di", "bi", and the tenth syllables "na", "na", and "lja".[7] The break is furthermore underscored by the relatively longer duration associated with all these syllables, and by the fact that the pitch at which these syllables are sung usually coincides with the base tone of melodic units.[8] The occurrence of the base tone therefore signals the conclusion as well as the start of each melodic unit. Thus, there is a co-occurrence of factors indicating continuity and discontinuity, integration and segmentation.[9] Put

[5] The technique, discussed below, which involves a pause between the ninth and tenth syllables of the line, is characteristic of Fjuljanin's region (the area around Novi Pazar) but does not characterize the South Slavic epic tradition as a whole (cf. Lord [1954: 467]).

[6] Our translations draw, in some instances, on Lord (1954).

[7] The recording can be accessed through the electronic database maintained by the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature (http://chs.harvard.edu/mpc) or directly at the following URL: http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HLNC.MPCOL:882330. To facilitate comparison with the audio recording, we cite, for each excerpt analyzed here, the disc number and timing for the relevant lines.

[8] By "base tone" we mean the tone on which the singer tends to settle at the end of the verse, the "gravitational center" of the verse.

[9] The Kuna tradition of "gathering-house chanting" described by Sherzer (1987: 106–107) offers an instructive comparandum: this genre involves a dialogue between two performers, a principal chanter who chants the verses of the song, and a "responder" who chants the word *teki* "indeed" after each verse. The responder "begins to chant during the

another way, the line is at one and the same time the locus of segmentation and the means of establishing continuity, and at any given moment one or the other of these functions may potentially be brought to the fore. Performative features play a crucial role in highlighting the intended effect. The tension between segmentation and continuity makes the line the basic "engine" that drives the movement of the song. It also creates the fundamental problem for our analysis, which can be described as the problem of "chunking" the discourse:[10] that is, of understanding how the discourse is articulated in terms of longer units and points of transition. Since every line can potentially establish either continuity or discontinuity, the flow of discourse can potentially be segmented in a variety of ways and at a variety of scales, depending on whether the emphasis falls on individual narrative events or on the cohesion of larger narrative units. Once again, performative features bear a large share of the burden in indicating the scale and contours of narrative organization.

II. *Methodology*

Our research centers on the variety of techniques the singer has at his disposal to mark points of articulation in the performance. These techniques can be either linguistic or performative: that is, they can concern either the words of the song or the way in which they are sung. We have identified a set of textual and performative features that lend themselves to use as sign-posts of points of articulation. At the level of the text, we have focused on a class of words termed by several linguists "discourse markers". "Discourse markers" are words that do not contribute to the semantic content of an utterance; they serve to mark boundaries in discourse and/or signal a transition from one discourse act to another.[11] Adverbs like "well", "so", "anyway", and "actually" frequently

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lengthened final vowel of the principal chanting chief, who in turn begins his next line during the lengthened *i* of *teki*" (106). The response thus provides continuity even as it marks the boundary between verses.

[10] As Herman notes (2009: 32), Labov and Waletzky (1967) had already suggested that "story-recipients monitor the discourse for signs enabling them to 'chunk' what is said into units-in-a-narrative-pattern".

[11] According to Hannay and Kroon (2005), "discourse acts" are the smallest communicative steps enacted in the speaker's discourse. Steen proposes the notion of discourse act as "basic discourse unit", which in its typical form consists of "one proposition, one clause, one intonation or punctuation unit, and one illocution" (Steen [2005: 283]). The basic units of discourse "are the manifestation of individual acts. They are typically

work as discourse markers in English. In the context of an epic song, discourse markers might indicate a change in topic or focus, a transition from narration to direct speech, or, more generally, a shift from one discourse act to another (for example, from a declaration to a command). Discourse markers thus provide a lexical means for marking points of articulation.

At the level of the performance, we have singled out a number of features that we refer to collectively as "performative discontinuities". The tradition to which Fjuljanin belongs permits a fairly wide degree of variation and flexibility, but we can speak of a "discontinuity" whenever the variation is pronounced enough to stand out from its surrounding context. We are focusing on six major discontinuities in the vocal performance. The first three concern the vocal melody proper, and are defined with respect to the base tone.[12] We apply the term "peak" to an upward movement of a 4th or more away from the established base tone; such large intervals generally occur only in the first syllable of a line, which gives the impression of a marked "peak" at the start of the verse. Less striking, but still noticeable enough to be useful as an attention-getting device, are melodic "curves", which we define as movements of a major or minor 3rd away from the base tone. Such curves usually extend across several syllables, which gives the line a curved shape. Shifts of the base tone are tracked as well. Two other discontinuities involve manipulations of the voice that do not belong to melody in the strict sense: these are the use of falsetto on the one hand, and, on the other, a variety of adjustments of the timbre of the voice, which we group together under the loosely-used rubric of "parlando" effects. Finally, the singer will occasionally adjust the rhythm or tempo of a verse or part of a verse in a way that seems to us significant.

In order to track Fjuljanin's deployment of lexical and performative markers, we have devised a shorthand system for marking up the text. This system provides an easy way of transcribing all the lexical and per-

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verbal acts by people who are coordinating their behavior with other people while they are engaged in a more or less conventionalized genre of communication" (Steen [2005: 306]). The term, which stems from a pragmatic account of human communication, was first introduced by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975: 27–28): "The units at the lowest rank of discourse are *acts* and correspond most nearly to the grammatical unit *clause*, but when we describe an item as an act we are doing something very different from when we describe it as a clause. Grammar is concerned with the *formal* properties of an item, discourse with the *functional* properties, with what the speaker is using the item for" (italics in the text).

[12] See above, n. 8.

formative features described above, as well as the important distinction between narrative and direct speech, which we print in italics:

Discourse Markers (boldface)

Peak

Curve

Falsetto

Parlando

Base tone shifts ↓ ↑

Manipulation of tempo / rhythm

Direct speech

Lexical discourse markers are printed in boldface. Peaks and curves are indicated by shading, with peaks being the darker of the two. Shifts of the base tone are marked by a marginal arrow pointing either up or down. A solid border around a syllable or word indicates that it is performed falsetto, while a dotted border marks a parlando effect. Underlining signifies an alteration of tempo or rhythm. Finally, as mentioned, direct speech is indicated by italics.

III. *Application*

A few selected examples will illustrate the contribution of the various features we have identified to the articulation of the performance. The importance of discourse markers and performative techniques as discursive sign-posts will become most readily apparent if we consider for a moment a potential alternative to this method of discerning the organization of the discourse: namely, syntax and the relationships of subordination it establishes. If we look specifically for periods organized in syntactic hierarchies of main clauses and subordinate clauses—syntactic structures that necessarily extend across multiple lines—we quickly find ourselves confronted by puzzling syntactical arrangements that suggest that syntax, in itself, is insufficient as an organizing principle. In many cases, hierarchical syntactical relations seem to be blurred or otherwise unhelpful as indicators of narrative structure.

Consider the following passage, in which Halil, who has just heard of his sister's abduction, sets off to see if he can find traces of the route taken by her abductors:

eh kad začu nesretan Halile		338	Hey! When unhappy Halil heard this,
te dofati brešku po srijedi		339	straightaway he seized his rifle by the middle,
ha da ode strmom us planinu		340	and he set off up the steep mountainside,
e kad dođe gore na granicu	↓	341	and when he came to the highland border,
na granicu carsku i ćesarsku	↑	342	to the border shared by Sultan and Emperor,
a kad dođe lazu široko—mu[13]		343	and when he came to a broad field,
e sve gleda travu po lazini		344	then he looked carefully at the grass in the field [to see whether …]

[PN 662, disc 1093, 0:15–0:45]

Syntactically, this passage consists of a sequence of adverbial temporal clauses ("kad" means "when") followed in some cases—but not all—by a corresponding main clause: *when* unhappy Halil heard this (338), he seized his rifle by the middle (339), he set off up the mountain's steep side (340); *when* he came to the highland border (341), to the border shared by the Sultan and the Emperor (342); *when* he came to a broad field (343), he looked at the grass in the field (344), to see whether …. Instead of a series of periods, each self-contained and formed by an adverbial clause followed by its main clause, here we have a set of clauses with no gravitation to any major climactic point; rather, the actions described are arranged in a fairly loose sequence of equally important steps. 'Coming to a broad field' and 'looking at the grass in that field', for example (343 and 344), is articulated in two separate acts, simply unfolding "what next" in the storyline. Temporal clauses seem to mark individual communicative steps no differently from the other clauses of this excerpt. Note that the temporal clause in lines 341–342 is actually used autonomously, without any syntactic completion. The particles "eh", "te", "ha" (which is a variant for "a"), "e", "a", and "a" in the non-temporal clauses—all of them conjunctions or adverbs starting the line—can be considered as discourse markers sign-posting the upcoming

[13] The dash indicates that the pause between the ninth and tenth syllables is noticeably longer than normal ("širokomu" is a single word, meaning 'broad'). The singer occasionally omits the tenth syllable altogether, in which case we print the missing syllable in parentheses (see, e.g., l. 995, quoted below).

narrative act; in other words, instead of marking syntactical relationships, they may have a pragmatic function.[14]

We posit that each line of this poem has an autonomous pragmatic force, which consists in what the line overall does, no matter what its particular syntactical form. Each line corresponds to a discourse act, which in most cases coincides with a clause. It should be noted, however, that a line, and discourse act, may also be constituted by a whole-line phrase, as for example in line 342, where the prepositional phrase not only expands the temporal clause, but also provides an important additional narrative step, in the form of an incremental specification of Halil's location.[15] The various types of acts performed in this song include, for instance, comments by the performer (e.g. "Oh! How Mujo was frightened!" 82), or the addition of details prolonging the focus on something across two contiguous lines (cf. 310–311, "That is none other than Miloš the Highwayman / from Izvor, a town of the King's realm"). When we listen to the performance of lines 338–344, we notice that melody actually stresses the three temporal clauses (338, 341, 343) in various ways (falsetto, peak, and curve with change of tempo). Performative features thus suggest that within the flow of narrative the singer does not privilege main over subordinate clauses. The performer seems to take every unit as a separate, equally-weighted step.[16]

We may go further and say that each line in fact corresponds not only to a discourse act but also to a performative act, where what is 'done' overall rests on the combination of words, tone of voice, and melody. If discourse acts are a matter of the pragmatic effects of language, performative acts are a matter of the pragmatic effects of *song*, which includes language as one of its constituents. The pragmatic force of each discourse act is itself enacted performatively, that is, by means of manipulations of vocal timbre, melody, tempo, and so on, which complement

[14] We would like to stress that in this tradition not only coordinating conjunctions and adverbs but also interjections seem to fulfill a discourse-marker function. Instances of the latter (occurring in the analyzed excerpts) are "uh", "eh", "he" "aj" and "haj".

[15] See above, n. 4.

[16] This 'equal weighting' from the pragmatic and performative point of view contrasts with the informational approaches of Hopper (1979) and Chvany (1996: chs. 19 and 20), whose distinction between "foreground" and "background" proceeds from specific assumptions concerning the distribution of information, and is mainly based on sentence-level grammatical features.

the force of the words.[17] At 338 the falsetto on "eh" in combination with "kad" is a proleptic gesture drawing the audience's attention to what comes next after the conclusion of the previous direct speech. At 339 "te," 'at that point', 'straightaway,' introduces the new information concerning Halil taking the rifle. At 340 "ha" and the simultaneous melodic interval characterizing the performance of the first two syllables singles out the close-up about Halil climbing the mountain. A distinctly higher melodic peak on "e kad" at 341 marks the next action, namely Halil reaching the border; the lower base tone adopted for the performance of 342 arguably matches the additional focus on the border itself (as a separate expansion). Then, at 343, the lexical variation "a kad" (very similar to "e kad") accompanied by a perceivable change of tempo highlights the next step, which consists of a zooming-in effect, on the field that Halil finds at the border. Lastly, at 344 the particle "a" and the curve are the sign-posts for an act whose force is to narrow down the visual focus on the grass Halil starts examining.

If the single line, with its dynamic tension between continuity and discontinuity, is the engine of narrative movement in this medium, then forward momentum is a matter of what single lines do: that is, the acts they perform, each with its own force. In order to reinforce this point and the corollary that syntactical articulation is an insufficient indicator of narrative movement, we may consider two other passages that arouse some syntactical puzzlement; both of them involve the subordinating conjunction "kad", 'when'—highly common in South Slavic epic songs (the only other subordinating conjunctions that appear with any frequency in the epics are "da", 'that', "dok", 'until', and "đe", 'where').

At line 327 the 'when'-clause is simply followed by the beginning of a quotation in direct speech:

uh kad zaću Arnaut Osmane	Oh! When Arnaut Osman heard this:
mući dajo mukom zamućijo	"Silence, uncle, say not a word! …"

[PN 662, disc 1092, 3:22–3:30]

Lord's translation (Lord [1954: 305]) supplies a main clause that is not in fact in the text: "When Osman the Albanian heard these words, *he said*"

[17] Bonifazi and Elmer (in press) considers the different performative techniques deployed in PN 662, which convey and enrich the communicative meaning of the song.

(italics added). From the perspective outlined above, however, such an insertion is unnecessary: when we consider the narrative as a sequence of equally-weighted pragmatic steps with no syntactical hierarchy, lines 327 and 328 are easily processed without the addition of a main clause.[18]

More strikingly, at the very end of the poem two almost identical ‘when’-clauses serve two different functions.

uh kad Mujo vide sa oćima		986	Oh! When Mujo saw with his eyes,
a kad vide na kapiju glavu		987	and when he saw the head at the gate,
aman što ga nemir ufatijo	↑	988	aman!, what distress took hold of him.
(...)	(...)		
a smije se Haljil po odaji		994	But Halil laughed in the chamber,
e kad vide Mujo sa oći(ma)		995	hey, when Mujo saw with his eyes.

[PN 662, disc 1104, 3:39–3:53 for lines 986–988; disc 1105, 0:15–0:23 for lines 994–995]

When Halil returns with the head of the villain Miloš, he plants the head at the gate, in order to fool his older brother Mujo into believing that the enemy is still alive. While the first ‘when’-clause (“Oh! when Mujo saw with his eyes”, 986) introduces the successful result of the trick in the form of Mujo’s distress (“what distress took hold of him”, 988), an almost identical temporal clause in line 995 rounds off the episode, and the narrative, by recalling Mujo’s astonishment (“but Halil laughed in the chamber, when Mujo saw with his eyes”). This is, in fact, the last autonomous act of the performance.[19]

[18] From a cognitive point of view, the formulaic recital of the soon-to-be-speaker’s name at the end of line 327 is sufficient to make clear the origin of the upcoming utterance.

[19] It is worth noting that the pragmatic function of ‘when’-clauses, and indeed the value of “kad” ‘when’ itself, may depend on a number of factors, including the position of the clause in the sequence of discourse acts. For example, at the end of reported direct speech “kad”-clauses push narration forward by establishing the frame for subsequent action (cf. Bakker [1991] on temporal subclauses in Herodotus). Preposed ‘when’-clauses typically do the same in English (cf. “When John arrived we started eating”). Postposed “when”-clauses, conversely, may have a different discourse function; they might even convey a turning point, as in “I was falling asleep, when the phone rang.” (cf. Thompson et al. [2007: 296]; Chafe [1984] considers the different discourse functions of preposed vs. postposed adverbial clauses). In the latter case “when” means “(and) just then,” underscoring suddenness. In most cases Fjuljanin uses “kad” in preposed temporal clauses; however, “kad” is also used in the common presentation formula “kad evo ti” (cf. 150 and 505), where suddenness is definitely conveyed, and “just then” looks like an apt paraphrase (on presentation formulas, see Elmer [2009]). The point is that “kad” does

The importance of performative features becomes even clearer as we move from what individual lines do to what sequences of lines do on a larger scale. In a written text, graphic conventions such as paragraphing provide a synoptic overview of textual segmentation. In the context of oral performance, words *and* melodies cooperate in delineating the shape of the narrative as it unfolds in time. Relevant here is Sherzer's notion of the "structuring" of oral poetry (as opposed to "structure"),[20] that is, the dynamic—we might even say "online"—process of creating subsequent chunks of text. Climactic sections of the narrative, visual "close-ups" on a specific scene or part of a scene, discrete portions of direct speech, and so on, may be accompanied by *ad hoc* acoustic effects, which may or may not overlap with the corresponding verbal signs. To illustrate, we may examine first an instance in which the verbal sequence and the corresponding melodic sequence reinforce each other and cooperate to produce an effect of particular excitement. In this passage, the villain Miloš pursues Halil, who has escaped after rescuing his sister (and with another young woman in tow); making use of a short-cut, Miloš lies in wait for Halil in a clearing:

ode Miloš poljom zeleni(jem)	↑	905	Miloš went out across the green field,
a udari prijekijem putom	{	906	and he struck out on a short-cut.
kad došao gore na Kunaru		907	When he came to Kunara in the mountains,
na Kunaru lazu širokome		908	Kunara with its broad field,
prijen Halila četiri sahata		909	four hours before Halil,
a skide se Miloš na lazinu		910	then Miloš dismounted in the field.
Miloš hoda i alata voda	}	911	Miloš went on foot and walked his horse.
uh kad izbi Mujović Haljile		912	Oh! When Mujo's Halil appeared
na bratskoga debela đogina		913	on his brother's stout white horse,
za Haljilom dvije cure mlade		914	behind Halil the two young girls,
a na njihne dvije bedevije		915	ah!, on their two Arabian mares,
e dere se Miloš ćese(džija)		916	hey, Miloš the Highwayman shouted: …

[PN 662, disc 1103, 2:23–3:11]

not necessarily characterize a clause as always belonging to the background of discourse; it may also signal foregrounded information. The syntactical oscillation between its use as a conjunction ("at the time that") and as an adverb ("[just] at that time") attests to this.

[20] Cf. Sherzer (1987: 137) and Sherzer and Woodbury (1987: 8).

The narrative progresses by adding new pieces of information line by line. Proceeding through the description of Miloš in pursuit, the passage reaches an internal climax with the sudden appearance of Halil (punctuated by the performer's "oh!") in line 912. Performative features reinforce this basic contour, and enrich it with additional emphasis. Line 905 is performed with a highly discontinuous melodic pattern including a higher melodic "peak", and then a less pronounced "curve", along with a clearly perceivable rhythmical alteration of the previous tempo (what might be called "turbulence" in the terminology of Longacre 1985).[21] This coincides with the moment in which the singer starts focusing on Miloš's pursuit of Halil. The subsequent lines (906–911) are performatively marked as a unified block (indicated by curved brackets in the margin) by an even tempo, a consistent rhythmical pulse, and repeated melodic contours. All of this emphasizes continuity. Then, exactly when Halil appears in Miloš's field of vision, additional pitch-movements occur (falsetto, repeated curves preceded by peaks in the very last three lines), while the rhythmical pulse remains constant. In line 916, the same kind of turbulence that characterizes line 905 recurs; this in fact is a boundary line switching from this brief narrative episode to the quotation of Miloš's words in direct speech.

A second example illustrates an alternative possibility for the relation between performative and textual features. Instead of the mutual reinforcement of text and music, we can detect a tension, built into the performance, between the kinds of continuity or discontinuity established by words on the one hand and music on the other. In the song's final episode, Halil returns to Mujo's castle, where he has surreptitiously placed Miloš's head on a post at the gate:

he daje mu sitne hožđeldije	975	Hey, he gives him tender words of greeting.
pitaju se za mir i za zdravlje	976	They ask after each other's health and well-being,
no kazahu zdravo da bijahu	977	and they said that they were well.
evo Mujo šenluk učinijo	978	Here now, Mujo began to celebrate,
no Haljil je bratu govorijo	979	but Halil said to his brother:

21 Drawing explicitly on the observed characteristics of oral narrative—specifically, the way that "phonological features mark the peak of a discourse"—Longacre (1985: 85) exploits and develops the notion of "turbulence" to refer to special zones of excitation at the climactic points of a story.

e moj brate Kladuški serdare	↓	980	"Hey, my brother, serdar of Kladuša,
aj da *vidiš ćuda sa oćima*		981	ah, see a wonder with your eyes,
e *đe stiže Miloš ćesedžija*		982	hey, how Miloš the Highwayman approaches.
haj *eno ga sade na kapiji*		983	Ah, there he is now at the gate . . ."

[PN 662, disc 1104, 2:48–3:29]

This sequence of lines has inherent continuity: the narrative proceeds linearly with strong forward momentum toward a clear climax, that is, a narrative (and emotional) peak. Such a peak coincides with the suspense provided by the moment in which Halil shows to Mujo the head of the enemy—which is both the actual proof of success and an act of trickery, since Halil attempts to convince Mujo that Miloš is still alive.

If we listen to how the singer performs this sequence, we realize that there is a remarkable discontinuity starting at lines 980–981, one that extends throughout the remaining lines of the song. This discontinuity consists in the shift from a higher to a lower base tone, along with a significantly slower tempo—both of which recall the style of singing at the beginning of the song. The force of the music seems to be in opposition to the force of the words: the local narrative strategy of movement toward the peak clashes with a melodic move whose global aim is arguably to achieve large-scale resolution by resuming the performative style of the opening. In other words, we can observe two different, co-occurring strategies, evident in two different aspects of the performance, the goals of which are operative on two different scales: the textual strategy works to establish the continuity of a narrative segment at the smaller scale of the individual episode, while the musical strategy imposes organization at the larger scale of the performance as a whole. The dynamic relationship between such multimodal messages (one encoded by words, and one encoded by music) ultimately underscores the synergy of the lexical and the performative components of the song, and enriches the song's expressive potential.

IV. *Relevance to Homeric Poetry*

By way of drawing out the implications of our approach for the interpretation of the Homeric poems, we may turn first to the arguments of Egbert Bakker in *Poetry in Speech*. Bakker claims that there is a funda-

mental correspondence between the *colon* in Homeric hexameters, the notion of "intonation unit", and the cognitive principle of what Chafe calls the "one new idea constraint".[22] The segmentation of spoken discourse in terms of discrete intonation units is stylized in Homer by means of concatenated metrical units (or *cola*); each of them represents a stylized intonation unit and "specifies the image or idea evoked by the preceding unit" (Bakker 1997: 52). This notion of a correspondence between information units and metrical units within the Homeric poems can be compared directly with our notion of a correspondence between discourse acts and lines in Fjuljanin's song. Even though the respective meters of the two traditions show some asymmetry related to the quantity of syllables and to the status of the *cola* themselves,[23] the relevant point of comparison is that in both cases discourse proceeds through the incremental concatenation of sequential units. Such a discourse-oriented, pragmatic perspective should be kept distinct from the purely syntactic notion of a "paratactic" style. In fact, the syntax of Homeric verse—paratactic or not—at times obscures the articulation of the discourse in terms of its pragmatic units. If one applies to the Homeric text the approach argued for above, foregrounding the stepwise progress of the discourse through individual acts and backgrounding syntactic hierarchies, one often arrives at a very different understanding of the crucial points of articulation than does a reader who attends primarily to syntactic cues. The difference may be illustrated by comparing Butler's translation of *Odyssey* 1.96–108 with the actual Greek text.

> So saying she [Athena] bound on her glittering golden sandals, imperishable, with which she can fly like the wind over land or sea; she grasped the redoubtable bronze-shod spear, so stout and sturdy and strong, wherewith she quells the ranks of heroes who have displeased her, and down she darted from the topmost summits of Olympus whereon forthwith she was in Ithaca, at the gateway of Ulysses' house, disguised as a visitor, Mentes,

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[22] "The identification of a coherent intonation unit is supported by a convergence of (a) the pauses preceding and following it, (b) the pattern of acceleration-deceleration, (c) the overall decline in pitch level, (d) the falling pitch contour at the end, and (e) the creaky voice at the end" (Chafe 1994: 60). The "one new idea constraint", once again formulated by Chafe (1994: 116 and 119) points to the fact that within one intonation unit speakers tend to express no more than one new idea (in terms of new information).

[23] Bakker's "units" are the *cola* that constitute the building blocks of the hexameter line, whereas the pragmatic units we are describing most often occupy the entire decasyllabic line; Bakker's units very frequently coincide with phrases, whereas ours very frequently coincide with clauses. It should be noted that, due to the much shorter length of the decasyllable, its constituent *cola* (of 4 and 6 syllables, respectively) are generally more integrated and less autonomous than their counterparts in the hexameter.

> chief of the Taphians, and she held a bronze spear in her hand. There she found the lordly suitors seated on hides of the oxen which they had killed and eaten, and playing draughts in front of the house.
> (Butler [2007 (1900):5])

Such a translation reflects a hypotactical reading of the text: all Athena's actions preceding her arrival at Odysseus' palace are incorporated in a single long period, which includes several subordinate clauses and many commas linking provisional pieces of information, until the point at which Athena is said to have found the suitors (the following full stop is the only one in the excerpt). However, if we examine the Greek text with an eye to articulation in terms of discourse acts (the performative dimension, of course, can only be inferred), the segmentation of discourse suggested by the sequence of units looks quite different. Here is the text of *Od.* 1.96–108, as printed in the edition of von der Mühll (1962):

ὣς εἰποῦσ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρὴν
ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇσ' ἀνέμοιο.
εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, ἀκαχμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν, τῷ δάμνησι στίχας ἀνδρῶν
ἡρώων, τοῖσίν τε κοτέσσεται ὀβριμοπάτρη,
βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων ἀΐξασα,
στῆ δ' Ἰθάκης ἐνὶ δήμῳ ἐπὶ προθύροισ' Ὀδυσῆος,
οὐδοῦ ἐπ' αὐλείου· παλάμῃ δ' ἔχε χάλκεον ἔγχος,
εἰδομένη ξείνῳ, Ταφίων ἡγήτορι, Μέντῃ.
εὗρε δ' ἄρα μνηστῆρας ἀγήνορας· οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα
πεσσοῖσι προπάροιθε θυράων θυμὸν ἔτερπον,
ἥμενοι ἐν ῥινοῖσι βοῶν, οὓς ἔκτανον αὐτοί.

Here is the same text without modern punctuation marks, but with vertical bars indicating clause-boundaries:[24]

ὣς εἰποῦσ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα
ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια | τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρὴν
ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇσ' ἀνέμοιο |
εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος ἀκαχμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ
βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν |τῷ δάμνησι στίχας ἀνδρῶν
ἡρώων | τοῖσίν τε κοτέσσεται ὀβριμοπάτρη |
βῆ δὲ κατ' Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων ἀΐξασα |
στῆ δ' Ἰθάκης ἐνὶ δήμῳ ἐπὶ προθύροισ' Ὀδυσῆος
οὐδοῦ ἐπ' αὐλείου | παλάμῃ δ' ἔχε χάλκεον ἔγχος

[24] Modern conventions of punctuation should be understood as a later tool for accommodating the text to presentation in writing. These conventions may coincide (or not) in varying degrees with the structure of the discourse.

εἰδομένη ξείνῳ Ταφίων ἡγήτορι Μέντῃ |
εὗρε δ' ἄρα μνηστῆρας ἀγήνορας | οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα
πεσσοῖσι προπάροιθε θυράων θυμὸν ἔτερπον
ἥμενοι ἐν ῥινοῖσι βοῶν | οὓς ἔκτανον αὐτοί

Following Bakker, the metrical cola can be understood as stylized intonation units subject to specific cognitive constraints, with each colon contributing essentially one new idea to the ongoing flow of information: cognitive and metrical segments tend to coincide.[25] Accordingly, it would be possible to identify in this stretch of text pragmatically relevant steps even within clausal units.[26] Our analysis, however, focuses on clause-boundaries because we are looking for discourse units rather than information units (the two need not be identical) and larger-scale points of discourse articulation, where new and old pieces of information form integrated, strategic communicative blocks. Such larger-scale points of articulation almost necessarily coincide with clause boundaries.[27] Each clause corresponds to a discourse act regardless of whether hypotaxis is deployed or not (and regardless of the degree of syntactical integration between clauses).[28] τά μιν φέρον … (97), εἵλετο δ' … (99), τῷ δάμνησι … (100), τοῖσίν τε … (101), βῆ δὲ … (102), στῆ δ' … (103), παλάμῃ δ' … (104), and so on, are all instances of clauses representing discourse acts. They contribute, in different ways, to the articulation of the flow of

[25] Interestingly enough, Fränkel's (1933) pioneering study showing that it is possible to identify *cola* in prose hinges on the relative autonomy of subclauses and phrases. In his analysis the vertical bars signal colon boundaries, but also imply that each unit contributes a separate step.

[26] For instance, as an anonymous reader reminds us, ἐπὶ προθύροισ' Ὀδυσῆος / οὐδοῦ ἐπ' αὐλείου in ll. 103–104 could be understood as a separate discourse step providing an "elaboration of the presented event" (in the reader's apt formulation). To be even more precise, what we observe here is the presentation of Athena's arrival in three distinct increments that visually zoom in on the scene in Odysseus' palace: the goddess first reaches the island (στῆ δ' Ἰθάκης ἐνὶ δήμῳ), then the forecourt of Odysseus' palace (ἐπὶ προθύροισ' Ὀδυσῆος), then the very threshold (οὐδοῦ ἐπ' αὐλείου). At the larger scale at which we are conducting our analysis, however, Athena's arrival in Ithaca represents a single discourse step.

[27] Note that discourse-marking particles are very frequently localized at clause-boundaries. Ancient Greek particles seem to be specialized for signaling discourse act-boundaries in much the same way as the South Slavic particles used by Fjuljanin; see Bonifazi, de Kreij and Drummen (2010).

[28] Homeric relative clauses, for example, may show a low degree of syntactical integration whenever the relative pronoun takes the form of the weak demonstrative ὅ/ἥ/τό; the borderline between dependency and independency at the syntactical level is very thin. For discourse-oriented assessments of different degrees of syntactical integration in modern languages, especially in connection with conjunctions and particles, see Laury (2008).

discourse by signaling subsequent narrative steps, each of them charged with some specific force. These steps in many instances correspond with the communication of discrete pieces of visual information—for example, the focus on the sandals, on the spear, on Athena darting.[29] The sequence of evenly-weighted discourse acts is more or less continuous, except for a major discontinuity in line 106, signaled by the evidentiary particle ἄρα, which points to the visualization of the suitors shared by Athena and the performer. This visualization sets the stage for the new scene that begins with the *colon* οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα and continues with the subsequent communicative step constituted by the focus on the suitors playing their game. Considered as a whole, then, this passage consists in two discrete visual "stagings" communicated through a continuous sequence of discourse acts, with a major pivot at line 106. Butler's translation, by privileging syntactic hierarchies over the discursive structure implied by discourse acts, obscures both the autonomous force of each individual act as well as the passage's structural articulation. This is most evident in his handling of the crucial switch in focus from Athena to the suitors in line 106. "There she found the suitors seated on hides . . . " in fact collapses the discrete focus of the new scene (the suitors at play) into the topical structure of the previous period (centered on Athena). It thereby minimizes the discursive force of the switch in focus. Butler's approach, we might say, synthesizes the discrete discourse acts into a synthetic whole. Butler is responding to syntactic cues present in the Greek, but disregarding the structure implied by the sequence of discourse acts, a structure that is arguably more important to the cognitive processing of the passage.

V. *Conclusions*

Within the performative genre of South Slavic epic, the line works as the fundamental engine that drives the movement of the song. The metrical shape and the melodic contour of the line serve both discontinuity and

[29] The importance of such visual details is entirely independent of the syntactic hierarchies in which they may be implicated: "The notion of syntactic dependence and apposition might seem to imply that the adding unit is less important than the previous unit… But whatever the value of this characterization may be for other discourses, it surely does not apply to Homer. When a unit is added, a detail within a frame has been singled out for verbalization. Nothing compels us to say that the detail is any less important than the frame, and in fact the detail may be the very reason why the frame has been set up at all" (Bakker [1997: 90]).

continuity: on the one hand, each verbal unit is semantically and syntactically bounded by the meter and fits into a quantitatively undetermined sequence of hierarchically equal units; on the other hand, melody is constructed in such a way that each melodic unit joins the concluding verbal unit to the subsequent one, thus creating a sense of flow and forward momentum.

Although there is a minimal form of hypotaxis in this tradition, syntactical hierarchies of independent and dependent clauses are in fact subordinate to the performative articulation of the song, which tends to level the difference between main and subordinate clauses; to put it another way, performative units nullify syntactical hierarchies. This is in accord with our claim that performative acts subsume discourse acts: different types of clauses and phrases shaping the line correspond to single strategic steps 'doing' something to achieve communicative effects.

Moreover, syntactic relationships between clauses do not provide an adequate means for identifying larger discourse units such as narrative "paragraphs" or climactic sections; in a word, they cannot guide the analysis of the verbal part of the performance beyond the sentence level. On the other hand, discourse markers (including interjections), and conspicuous melodic discontinuities, however multifunctional they may be, contribute a great deal to the structuring of the discourse: they can sign-post major narrative boundaries (for example the switch from direct speech to third-person narration) as well as emotional peaks and changes of setting.

Words and music work together to produce expressive effects, but their synergy often relies as much on antithetical as on mutually reinforcing tendencies. Even as the narrative is progressing linearly on the verbal level, musical features can evoke connections with distant previous moments of the performance (as we saw in lines 975–983). Thus, the song's communicative power derives both from potential harmonies as well as potential tensions between its verbal and non-verbal components.

The results of our analysis have relevance as well for the interpretation of Homeric poetry. An appreciation for the potentially autonomous force of discourse acts encourages the cultivation of a reading strategy that focuses less on syntactic relationships and more on the narrative and visual relevance of each subsequent clause or *colon*. Such a strategy is arguably the truest way to realize the pragmatic design of a poetry intended for performance.[30]

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WORKS AND DAYS AS PERFORMANCE

Ruth Scodel

Abstract

The conventions of Greek poetry allow several ways for the here-and-now of a poetic performance to be related to the content of the poem. This paper argues that Hesiod's *Works and Days* uses all three possible modes: the speaker at different moments resembles the epic poet, who self-consciously performs but does not acknowledge the external audience; the elegaic or lyric poet who directly addresses the audience; and the poet who pretends to be presenting his sequence of thought from a time before the performance. Considering the last mode mitigates some of the problems of coherence in the poem, since in thought the speaker can address people not present and move freely in time.

Works and Days defines itself, from the start, as a poetic performance. It begins with an invocation of the Muses:

> Μοῦσαι Πιερίηθεν ἀοιδῇσι κλείουσαι,
> δεῦτε Δί' ἐννέπετε (*WD* 1–2)

Such an invocation immediately frames the following speech as performance—what Bauman defines as

> … a way of speaking, whose essence resides in the assumption of responsibility for a display of communicative skill, highlighting the way in which communication is carried out, above and beyond its referential content.[1]

Performance intends to give pleasure and demands to be evaluated on its own terms, not as ordinary speech. The invocation as a frame must have been redundant in whatever the original settings of performance were. Performances had recognizable, external social markers, whether the occasion was a formal competition or an informal gathering. The invocation of the Muses, however, formally marks the transition from preparation for performance to the performance itself—entry into what J.M. Foley calls the "performance arena".[2]

Since, however, the authenticity of the proem was doubted in antiquity, it is important to note that the opening of the poem proper establishes

[1] Bauman (1986: 3).
[2] Foley (1995: 47–49).

its performance mode even without the proem, since hexameter lines without introduction would in themselves indicate performance, and since the opening lacks any of the necessary pragmatic markers for it to be anything else. Indeed the evidence that some ancient texts lacked the proem confirms its life as a performance script, since these texts probably went back to performance by rhapsodes who preferred proems adapted to the immediate occasion.[3] Such a substitute proem would still serve to frame the performance. The papyri with extra verses at 173a–e (see West's apparatus on 173) perhaps reflect rhapsodic performance.

This seems to be a banal point. While there has been considerable debate about whether *WD* was orally composed, nobody doubts that its early reception must have taken place in performance, since the only alternative would be that it was from the start composed for circulation as a written text.[4] Yet a consideration of its nature as a performance script is useful for rethinking the very familiar problems of coherence in *Works and Days*. Performances, like written texts, divide "the instance of enunciation" from what is said: there is a here-and-now in which the text is performed, distinct from the content of the performance, which the surviving text partially reproduces.[5] How we understand the relation between performance itself and what is performed will affect how we understand the discourse. The speech within a poetic performance is not "real" speech, but, in the (controversial) terms of speech-act theory, parasitic—a performance borrows the language of everyday transactions but does not have its usual felicity conditions or force.[6]

If we knew what kind of performance *WD* was, we would be able to address its famous difficulties of coherence more clearly. At the core of these problems are address and situation—issues closely related to the instance of enunciation and its relation to content. At the beginning of the poem, the speaker warns Perses against spending his time attending to disputes, and it soon becomes clear that Perses and the speaker are engaged in a quarrel. The dispute apparently concerns an inheritance in which the speaker and Perses each had a legitimate share, but that

[3] Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1928: 39–40) (on 1–10), comments that rhapsodes could not use the extant proem because festivals of Zeus were not frequent. (Compare Verdenius [1985: 13–14].) Wilamowitz also remarks that the proem is unconnected with what immediately follows, but introduces the entire poem.

[4] Oral composition: Notopoulos (1960), Havelock (1982: 208–219); writing: West (1978: 44), cf. West (1966: 40–41); Stein (1990: 6–54).

[5] Calame (2005: 4–5).

[6] Searle (1979: 58–85).

the speaker claims that Perses took more than he was entitled to and apparently used it in gifts to the members of the local elite who generally settled legal disputes (37–39). Since these oligarchs are mentioned, and then abused, in the third person, we would naturally assume that they are not present. The speaker then turns away from this immediate situation, however, to explain why sustaining life requires work. After he tells the story of Pandora, he introduces a further narrative with a second-person singular, apparently speaking to Perses (105–106). He then announces that he will tell a fable to the *basileis*, who thus seem to be present after all. He delivers a series of warnings to both Perses and the *basileis*. Next, however, he turns away from the legal context to give advice about farming, human relations, ritual taboos, seafaring, lucky and unlucky days. The dispute fades from sight. But, at 393–396, the speaker says that Perses has recently (νῦν) come to him for help; while the poem has certainly depicted Perses as lazy, it is not easy to reconcile a Perses who comes begging for help with a Perses who is providing gifts to the *basileis* in order to win a dispute. In any case, it is hard to imagine that a Perses who is trying to cheat his brother out of his property would listen to an extended lecture on the agricultural chores of the year.

This problem of coherence is entirely distinct from the issue of fictionality. I actually believe that Hesiod was a real individual, that he almost certainly had a brother named Perses, that he had some kind of dispute with his brother about an inheritance, that his father came from Aeolic Cyme to Ascra, and that he won a tripod at the funeral games of Amphidamas.[7] And yet, since the difficulties are internal, even if we agreed that the poem has no basis in external realities, the problems of the coherence of the internal addressees are not solved. For example, at 393–396, how is a member of the audience to infer a coherent Perses who tries to borrow from Hesiod when he has just been hearing about Perses' attempts to use legal methods to take his property? A real Perses may have acted in a way that would be hard to understand, but there is no reason Hesiod, had he wished, could not have invented a Perses who would be easier to comprehend. Audiences tend to apply rules of coherence to poetic texts, and to expect the behavior of the characters to make sense.[8]

[7] A nuanced treatment of biographical issues is Most (1993). Much English-speaking scholarship sees all the autobiographical material as fictional, developing Griffith (1983): so Lamberton (1988); Nagy (1990: 72–74); Rosen (1990); Martin (1992).

[8] Rabinowitz (1987: 141–169).

It is possible to unite the various indications of the text into a workable story.[9] The most successful attempts at understanding Perses assume that Perses is a projection of the poem as it proceeds, changing because he is supposed to be learning the didactic message.[10] Either strategy alleviates some interpretive difficulties. Neither, however, explains why the story is so hard to construct, or why, if Perses is gradually reformed, the speaker does not mark this transformation more overtly.

When a performance belongs to a recognizable genre, the rules of the genre define the kind of performance it is and so the relationship between the here-and-now and what is actually performed. *WD*, however, is a unique composition, and its early audiences probably did not have sharp generic expectations that would guide them in understanding it. Both its frame and its contents show many similarities with Egyptian and Near Eastern literature, but nothing from these cultures closely resembles it as a whole.[11] Its combination of different elements—the preaching of justice, agricultural calendar, proverb, fable, mythical narrative, is unique.[12] No work of wisdom literature outside the tradition that it generated—the tradition that leads through Aratus and Lucretius to Virgil and beyond—really resembles it. So the question of what kind of performance it is cannot be answered by invoking its genre.

There are, generally and crudely, three kinds of relationship between moment-of-performance and content-of-performance in early Greek poetry. In epic and narrative hymn, the opening frame defines the performer as a narrator. In the here-and-now, the performer speaks or sings about other times and places. Then there are forms in which the performance is also "real" speech. In ritual song, the performance frame is also a ritual event, and the performance is really what it performs. Pindar's *Paean* IX (fr. 52k) was a Theban ritual response to the solar eclipse of 463. The illocutionary act was exactly what it claimed to be, but performance gave it another dimension: as ritual it could only be efficacious or not, but as performance it could be evaluated simultaneously on aesthetic criteria. When Solon in elegies or iambics warned his fellow-Athenians that their actions endangered their polis or defended his policies, there was probably barely a gap in the original performance between

[9] For example, Clay (2003: 35–36); van Groningen (1957).

[10] Schmidt (1986: esp. 52).

[11] So West (1997: 306–332), collects parallels for many elements of the poem, but none for such a combination.

[12] So Nicolai (1964: 191–195).

the performance-act and the speech-act he was really doing: he could perform and warn at the same time, since the audience of the poem-as-performance and the addressees of the messages overlapped. However, Athenians could applaud the poem and ignore its advice. We can see the difference between the types pragmatically: in narrative, deictic pronouns normally have meaning only inside the imagined world, while in ritual songs and some symposiastic poetry, terms such as "this" or "now" could refer to the actual context shared by performer and audience, although they do not always refer to the performance context.[13]

But there is also a third type, in which the performer speaks or sings *as if* he or she were not performing but were simply engaging in some other kind of speech. Greek poetry offers an abundance of make-believe speaking situations.[14] Sappho 1 is surely not a prayer to Aphrodite, but a (make-believe) representation of a prayer to Aphrodite. Alcaeus frs. 6 and 326 were not recited during storms at sea. The members of the audience help create the performance by pretending not to be the audience. In everyday life, people (in every culture) regularly function as side participants in conversations, when they overtly listen to conversations in which they are not active participants; the habit of following and engaging with discourse when one is not speaking trains audiences in understanding such compositions.[15]

Ritual performances, when the work was reperformed outside the ritual context, became similarly make-believe. Someone who sang Pindar's *Paean* IX (fr. 52k) at a symposium or any occasion other than its original performance was in some fashion imitating that original performance. Still, this performer in no sense became the original performer.[16] Cognitive psychologists continue to investigate and debate exactly what happens when people watch drama (or read fiction), but it is clear both that they experience real emotions and may even feel "transported", and that they are not ordinarily confused about the boundaries between fiction/performance and the world outside the frame.[17] All the evidence suggests that ancient Greek audiences were not significantly different from those of the present—the audience cried at a successful tragedy but did not try to interrupt it in order to change the outcome.

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[13] Latacz (1985) discusses the fictional deictics of early Greek lyric, against the extreme views of Rösler (1980).

[14] "Fiktive Sprechsituation": Albert (1988: 51–54).

[15] Gerrig (1993: 104–110).

[16] Contra Nagy (1996: 61).

[17] Recent discussion in Holland (2008).

Performance in general can permit make-believe even when the poem itself is a true performative. Whatever immediate function Alcman's *Partheneion* served at its first performance, its audience certainly knew that the young women singing it were not singing their own words, even though the point of view represented is consistently supposed to be theirs. They represent themselves as Alcman (and perhaps the ritual itself) imagines them. In epinician, the song may present itself as the poet's thought in the act of composition. Pindar could compose poems and probably teach them to a chorus, yet the song may pretend to be a spontaneous outpouring in which he casts around for a suitable topic, changes his mind, interrupts himself, or reminds himself that he was supposed to compose this commission, but forgot. The poem presents itself as spontaneous, in what Carey dubbed the "oral subterfuge".[18] It is not exactly a subterfuge nor is it exactly oral, however; it presents the song as the poet's thoughts before or during composition. Similarly, a chorus may sing as if preparation for song were still under way (Alcman 3.79)[19] In another, later, genre, Old Comedy, time and space are treated as entirely fluid and open to manipulation.

What kind of performance, then, is *Works and Days*? Formal proems are associated with the first type, in which the speaker assumes the function of narrator. However, the proem is extremely slippery. The invocation of the Muses very quickly becomes a brief hymn to Zeus:

> Μοῦσαι Πιερίηθεν ἀοιδῇσι κλείουσαι,
> δεῦτε Δί' ἐννέπετε, σφέτερον πατέρ' ὑμνείουσαι.
> ὅν τε διὰ βροτοὶ ἄνδρες ὁμῶς ἄφατοί τε φατοί τε,
> ῥητοί τ' ἄρρητοί τε Διὸς μεγάλοιο ἕκητι.
>
> Muses from Pieria who create fame by means of song, come and speak of Zeus, hymning your own father, through whom mortal men are alike unspoken and spoken, in speech or outside speech, by the will of great Zeus.

The participle lacks an object: the poet fails to tell us what the Muses provide with *kleos*, which implies, surely, that wherever the specified means of *kleos* operates—songs—they are its providers. Yet in the next verses this task seems to be assigned to Zeus, and very emphatically, since the universal polar doublet appears twice, framed by the phrases that emphasize that Zeus is responsible. The audience is left to make sense of this double role of the Muses and Zeus by considering their

[18] Carey (1981: 5); critique in Bonifazi (2000).
[19] Carey (1989: 552).

usual functions. Zeus, in Homer, is the source both of memorable events themselves and of *kleos* as what people say, ordinary *kleos*. The Muses concern themselves exclusively with song, and they can provide singers with access to knowledge that transcends the routine *kleos* provided by poetic tradition itself.

Yet this traditional division does not have a transparent relevance here. First, the Muses have not been summoned to celebrate famous men. Instead, they are summoned with the cletic term δεῦτε and told to provide a hymn to Zeus; yet the hymnic expansion on Zeus' name again suggests that the performance to come will somehow concern the fame of mortal men (not that of Zeus, as one might think after hearing only the two opening lines).

The theme of *kleos*, however, then immediately elides into that of justice by means of an elaboration on Zeus' power:

> ῥέα μὲν γὰρ βριάει, ῥέα δὲ βριάοντα χαλέπτει,
> ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίζηλον μινύθει καὶ ἄδηλον ἀέξει,
> ῥεῖα δέ τ' ἰθύνει σκολιὸν καὶ ἀγήνορα κάρφει
> Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης, ὃς ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει.
> κλῦθι ἰδὼν ἀίων τε, δίκῃ δ' ἴθυνε θέμιστας
> τύνη·
>
> Easily he makes strong, easily he afflicts what is strong, easily he diminishes the conspicuous and increases the obscure, easily he straightens the crooked and parches away the arrogant, Zeus who thunders on high, who lives in the supreme house. Hearken, seeing and hearing, and guide judgments in accordance with justice.

Zeus' power is at first defined in a way that clearly explains why Zeus is responsible for human fame: he determines who becomes and remains important or conspicuous. Soon, however, this power is moralized. He straightens the crooked, and it is the arrogant whom he parches away. Up to this point, however, the following performance could be a hymn to Zeus or even a narrative about mortals.

The prayer, however, redefines the performance. A prayer is the standard ending for a prooemial hymn, but it is ordinarily either aimed directly at the present performance, or is a very general prayer for success in the god's domain or for the performance itself, whether for the performer alone, for the audience, or both (for example, *Hom. Hymn Aphr.* 10.19–21; *Hom. Hymn Ath.* 11.5; *Hom. Hymn Dem.* 13.3; *Hom. Hymn Helios* 31.17–19). Hesiod's prayer, in contrast, implies that Zeus needs to pay careful attention to something other than the song as a source of pleasure. The applicable convention prompts the audience to expect a prayer

for the performance, but the emphasis of the prayer points outside the frame, to real-world concerns. Since the prayer for Zeus' attention and justice follows directly from the assertion of his power to make men successful or obscure, the audience will surely assume that the just *themistes* he is asked to guarantee will determine such an outcome, and that this outcome, in term, will make men famous in a way that will lead to their celebration in song by the Muses.

So when the speaker of the poem declares that he will speak authoritative truth to Perses, ἐγὼ δέ κε Πέρσῃ ἐτήτυμα μυθησαίμην (at the point where he might instead have announced the topic of a song), what follows has been defined simultaneously as two different speech-acts. Zeus is asked not only to pay attention to the performance that is beginning, but also to enforce justice, which can only take place beyond the frame of that performance. Insofar as Zeus is its intended audience—and Zeus is, of course, an entirely possible audience—it begins as an explication of the prayer, an attempt at persuading Zeus to act. In some circumstances of performance a mortal audience would accept the prayer as genuine, if the members of the audience either knew that a dispute between Hesiod and Perses was under way or at least had no reason not to believe it. In other circumstances, however, the prayer would be make-believe, either simply a device of the performance or a re-enactment of a prayer that had been "real" when it was first delivered. Even if the prayer is "real", insofar as the audience is the audience that knows it is attending a poetic performance, it points the audience towards a particular type of performance. The prayer defines the coming poem in two different ways as a display to which Zeus is supposed to respond, while the members of the audience know it is aimed at them. This is a pointer to the kind of performance it will be. It is very unlikely to be a hymnic or heroic narrative.

When Hesiod turns to Perses, the poem becomes openly dramatic, since we can be confident, I think, that the poem is not "really" addressed to Perses, but to its audience, and the invocation of the Muses makes that clear. It may be worth noting that Near Eastern wisdom texts have no convention comparable to the Muses that marks off a poetic performance. So the performance is unusual, because its proem defines it as performance, but it then becomes a performance of the third kind, in which the speaker is pretending to be engaging in a different kind of speech. As Arrighetti has pointed out, *WD* becomes more like lyric than like epic.[20]

[20] Arrighetti (1975).

WD, by creating an internal audience, becomes something like dramatic monologue. It is impossible to know whether in the original performance situation audience members would have understood the prayer to Zeus as a real prayer they were overhearing. The poem becomes overtly make-believe, however, once it addresses Perses, whether or not Perses actually existed and whether or not Hesiod had a quarrel with him, because the addresses to Perses and later the *basileis* are not overtly a performance, and these addresses are the whole first part of the poem, not violations of the frame. *WD* begins as drama. This does not mean, however, that the opening promise that Hesiod will speak "truth" to Perses is false. Clearly, the content of this poem is profoundly serious, and the speaker regards it as both true and important. What is fictional is not what the speaker says (although we need not assume that it is all literally true, of course), but the pretense he is actually speaking it to the audience he is addressing at this moment.

After the claim to speak truth to Perses, the opening of the poem proper is a wrench: Οὐκ ἄρα μοῦνον ἔην Ἐρίδων γένος, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν /εἰσὶ δύω ("It turns out that the family of Strifes is not single, but there are two of them on the earth," 9–10). Wilamowitz commented that the proem lacked any connection with what follows it.[21] Verdenius argues that Hesiod has just promised to tell the truth, so a statement that the speaker previously misunderstood the nature of Eris easily follows. The *Theogony* was not quite accurate, and Hesiod, dedicated to truth, sets it right.[22] The proem, however, has not led the audience to expect that the truths at issue are relative to an earlier poetic performance; indeed, following the resounding praise of Zeus and the prayer that Zeus direct a verdict in accordance with justice in line 9, the audience must expect that the poet will speak "truths" that are obviously relevant to Zeus' justice. Most strikingly, the use of ἄρα with the imperfect locates the discourse at a particular moment of insight and identifies the conclusion it expresses—that Eris cannot be a single goddess, but that there must be two with the same name—as surprising.[23] Yet the audience is given no basis for knowing how the speaker has reached this surprising idea, and only as the thought progresses can the audience connect this insight to the themes implied by the proem. Indeed, while it becomes clear

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[21] Wilamowitz (1928: 39).
[22] Verdenius (1985: 14–15 [on 11]).
[23] Denniston (1954: 36–37).

that the dual Eris is important for the argument of the poem, nothing ever reveals what made Hesiod recognize the good Eris. Since Perses' behavior all belongs on the side of bad Eris, it can only have prompted the speaker's reflections on good Eris through intermediate stages, in which, for example, the speaker would consider what Perses should be doing instead of watching disputes, and what would motivate him to do that.

This is the only example of this idiom of ἄρα with the imperfect in Hesiod. The Homeric poems offer a handful of examples, all in character-speech. In these examples, it is never difficult to understand what prompts the speaker's moment of realization. Achilles at *Il.* 9.316 has realized after being dishonored that he has never received appropriate gratitude for his service at Troy; Patroclus is driven by Achilles' pitilessness to assert that he cannot really be the child of Peleus and Thetis (*Il.* 16. 33–34). A character can use it when talking to himself. Achilles comments in surprise when he realizes that a god must have rescued Aeneas:

> ἦ ῥα καὶ Αἰνείας φίλος ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν
> ἦεν· ἀτάρ μιν ἔφην μὰψ αὔτως εὐχετάασθαι (*Il.* 20.34–38)

> So in fact it turns out that Aeneas is dear to the immortal gods. But I thought that he was boasting idly and to no purpose.

In each case, the external audience knows exactly why the character has realized a previously hidden truth. In *WD*, although Hesiod's reasoning is perfectly clear in the following lines, the external prompt is missing. That gap is, pragmatically, a vital signal to the audience. It confirms the proem's hint that the poem is dramatic, since the gap implies a situation in which the speaker is involved to which the audience has (inadequate) access only through the speaker.

The audience, then, is abruptly placed in the middle of a speech or a process of thought that has already been under way. Only later does the speaker indicate what context has led to these thoughts. Similar procedures appear in monody and elegy, where indirect or delayed revelation of the external prompt is so familiar that it becomes unnoticeable. Archilochus fr. 13 West, for example, begins:

> κήδεα μὲν στονόεντα, Περίκλεες, οὔτέ τις ἀστῶν
> μεμφόμενος θαλίῃς τέρψεται οὐδὲ πόλις·
> τοίους γὰρ κατὰ κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
> ἔκλυσεν …

> Neither any citizen nor the city will criticize groaning grief and delight in festive banqueting. For such men the wave of the resounding sea washed over …

In Sappho 16, for example, the priamel poem, the poem begins with a broad general statement that is easy to understand but completely without context. The other people with whom the poet disagrees, ο]ἰ μὲν and οἰ δὲ, ("some people", "others") do not seem to be present, except in the speaker's mind. The poem appears to see the public in general as its audience:

> πά]γχυ δ' εὔμαρες σύνετον πόησαι
> π]άντι τ[ο]ῦτ (5–6)
>
> It is completely easy to make this comprehensible to everyone

Only at line 15 is Anactoria, and then Sappho's longing to see her, mentioned. Lines 15–20, whether or not they constitute the last lines of the poem, require a new understanding of the opening. The poet does not just happen to be thinking about what is most beautiful; she is preoccupied with a beloved, and her general reflections are shaped by these personal concerns. *WD* is considerably harder on its audience, however, since Sappho's opening follows a familiar formal pattern, while the beginning of *WD* aggressively presents itself as not a beginning. Only the performance frame and the hexameter define it as a performance instead of a social solecism.

Perses is finally addressed at 27, sixteen lines later, and he is obviously supposed to have heard this part of the speech, since he is enjoined to remember and heed it. The poem is not just a mimesis of a speech, but it is a mimesis of a speech that has either already begun within its fictional world or that is possible only within a particular situation that has not been defined when it begins. This demands a further effort from the audience, an agreement to participate in the poem's make-believe. The proem marks off the performance as a performance, but when it ends the audience is required to enter a new dramatic world in which the speaker's thoughts are already in progress.

I would like to suggest that this overt fictionality allows the audience to take one further step as the poem continues: to assume that much of the poem, like the section of Pindaric odes that represent the poet's meditations about the poem, actually takes place in the speaker's mind. Initially the speaker addresses Perses, who within the fiction is clearly present, and speaks about the *basileis* in the third person beginning at 38. In 40, he calls them νήπιοι, "fools". In Homeric exclamations, this is a term mainly of narrator-speech, used also by characters evaluating other characters.[24] A character can call someone νήπιος, but nobody

[24] de Jong (1987: 86–87).

ever refers in the third person to someone who is present as a νήπιος. So the *basileis* are surely not at this point there in the fictional world (if they were the speaker would be insulting them in a way that would be very unlikely to win him their support). What, then, is the imagined setting? It seems unlikely to be a private conversation, if only because there is no turn-taking, and only one speaker. Because the speaker refers to Perses as a spectator of disputes in the *agorê* (28–30) before challenging him to settle their dispute here-and-now, *agorê*, a public space, seems the most plausible setting. Yet a speaker would hardly begin a speech in such a situation in the confusing way the poem starts.

At 202, however, Hesiod announces that he will tell the *basileis* a fable. He then addresses them directly at 248 and 263. They are, clearly, present. One way to look for an imagined setting is to examine deictics, but most deictics in *WD* are anaphoric and refer within the text itself. There is, though, one striking exception: the expression τήνδε δίκην appears three times, at 39 (of the *basileis* who wish to decide τήνδε δίκην), and again at 249 and 269, both in addresses to the *basileis*. What exactly δίκη means in these passages is difficult. On 39, scholars argue that δίκη cannot mean "lawsuit" (the word does not have this sense in Homer). So Verdenius modifies West's "this (known) verdict" so that it means "the kind of judgement as it known here" and in 249 and 269 translates "the kind of justice that is practiced here" (West prefers "this judging of yours"). Most translates 39 "want to pass this judgment".[25] Whatever precisely it means, the deictic, combined with the address to the *basileis*, implies a context of the speech—it belongs to a public occasion in which everyone present can be expected to know what δίκη the speaker is talking about. Evidently, the segment addressed to the *basileis* takes place in a public and formal setting; the *basileis* are imagined as assembled in their judicial capacity, whether or not a trial is actually in progress. It is especially tricky because ὅδε is the speaker-centered deictic.[26]

Yet, after this passage, the *basileis* vanish utterly, and are neither addressed nor mentioned again. The following parts of the poem, with their general advice and the agricultural calendar could not possibly be delivered in such a context.

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[25] Older views in West (1978: 152 [on 39]). Verdenius (1985: 39 and 143 [on 39 and 269]); Most (2006: 89).

[26] Bakker (1999).

In 213–292 the poem offers a series of arguments in favor of justice, and addresses to Perses or the *basileis* come to serve an obvious organizational function—they are almost discourse markers, telling the audience when a new segment is under way. The gnomic sections of the poem, however (320–380 and 695–764, and the Days), do not address Perses directly. Scholars disagree about whether Perses is, nonetheless, the addressee in parts or all of these passages. Some of the advice would obviously be relevant to Perses, especially at the beginning of the first gnomic string, with its warnings against injustice in 320–326. However, when the speaker criticizes anyone who mistreats a suppliant or a guest-friend, commits adultery with a brother's wife, abuses orphans, or insults an elderly parent, it is hard to believe that any hearer would consider this advice from one brother to another—Perses may be idle and dishonest, but he is surely not supposed to be contemplating the seduction of his brother's wife, and his other offenses could hardly receive so much emphasis if he were. The gnomic sections, then, seem to be addressed to a generic second person, someone concerned to have good relations with neighbors, for example.[27] Again at 707, which recommends against making a friend the equal of one's brother (but says that one should treat one's friends properly), it would be grotesque to imagine the speaker's brother as the addressee. So at times the poem shifts into an elegiac performance-type, in which performance-speech and real-world speech are very close, perhaps indistinguishable.

WD therefore has elements of all three basic performance types. Its proem suggests narrative, and the poem does include segments of mythical narrative; parts of the poem, including the Days, bring the audience within the performance frame very close to the audience outside it, and thus work in a way similar to ritual performances; much of the first part of the poem is make-believe, where the speaker ignores the performance situation and the external audience members are overhearers. Within the make-believe situation, the speaker addresses his brother in public, but not before a court, but elsewhere he is in a court, or at any rate before the assembled *basileis*. When this shifting in the make-believe situation is combined with the abrupt opening of the poem proper at line 10, it becomes clear that the speech represented could not be made in any single situation in the real world. There are no obvious pointers for the

27 Schmidt (1986: 52–58).

transitions from one setting to another; nothing marks the shifts except the changes in addressee and topic.

So the poem is surely not intended to imitate any possible speech in the world. By opening the poem in mid-thought, and shifting the relationship between speaker and audience, Hesiod defines the only real locations for the poem as the performance itself and the speaker's own mind. Not only need Perses and the *basileis* not be present in reality, they need not be present even as make-believe. When not, in effect, directly addressing the real audience, *WD* represents a speaker who imagines those whom he would like to address and tells them what he wants to say—messages to which, in any real world, they would be very unlikely to listen.

D'Alessio has demonstrated how Greek lyric, especially Pindar, can set the temporal deictic center of a poem at a time before its performance, including the time of its composition.[28] The most helpful example for Hesiod is *Ol.* 10,1–2, where the poet says:

> Τὸν Ὀλυμπιονίκαν ἀνάγνωτέ μοι
> Ἀρχεστράτου παῖδα, πόθι φρενός
> ἐμᾶς γέγραπται.
>
> Read to me the Olympic victor, son of Archestratus, where he is inscribed in my mind

The inscription is in the poet's mind, and the moment represented is the poem's composition. The imperative is profoundly strange, since it is defined as an act of reading a text written in a place accessible only to the poet. The imagined reader's need to be able to see into the speaker's memory; the addressees must be the Muses and Aletheia, who are mentioned in the following lines.[29] However we understand it, the poet is not just speaking from the moment he begins work on the composition; he is dramatizing his own mental activity.

If we understand that such representation of the speaker's mind is a significant component of *WD*, we mitigate some of its difficulties. The beginning in mid-thought is no longer so jarring. A man who is thinking, remembering, or fantasizing may jump from one addressee to another or one situation to another. This is not the same as treating the sequence of the poem as a series of free associations, for it does not consider the

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[28] D'Alessio (2004).

[29] Verdenius (1988 ad loc [p. 55, with earlier bibliography]) calls it "absolute", but the parallels do not convince.

underlying reasons for the poem's movement from one topic or addressee to another, but the apparent failure to signal these transitions. *WD* is in part a representation of a man who is speaking in the theater of the mind.

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PART II

LITERACY AND ORALITY

EMPOWERING THE SACRED: THE FUNCTION OF THE SANSKRIT TEXT IN A CONTEMPORARY EXPOSITION OF THE BHĀGAVATAPURĀṆA

McComas Taylor

Abstract

The Bhāgavatapurāṇa is one of the master-texts of the Sanskritic archive and is the foundational source of narratives relating to the deity Kṛṣṇa. Since it reached its current form about a millennium ago, public oral 'performances' of the text have been sponsored as a means of accumulating religious and social capital. These week-long events are a significant form of contemporary religious practice in the Hindu cultural world, but have received little or no scholarly attention. In this paper I describe one such event that was held in Uttarakhand, North India, in November 2009. What is the role of the Sanskrit text in the oral performance? I identity four functions: first, the text provided a focus of ritual action; second, it was the source of the overall structure and content of the event; third, it was the object of the exponent's daily silent reading or *pārāyaṇa*; finally, it was the source of many of the Sanskrit verses around which the exponent constructed his vernacular comment. In concluding, I argue that a spectrum of social and cultural practices—ritual, oral, textual and performative—all contribute towards the validation and empowerment of discourses relating to Kṛṇṣa.

Introduction: What is the Bhāgavatapurāṇa?

The Sanskrit word *purāṇa* means 'old', and in the context of the collections of texts known as the Purāṇas it may mean either 'old stories' or 'stories of the old days'.[1] These texts are vast encyclopaedic repositories

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[1] Some of the material in this paper first appeared in an earlier form in 'Indian Idol: Narrating the Story of Kṛṣṇa in Globalising Contexts', the final report of a research project funded by the POSCO TJ Park Foundation (http://www.postf.org/others/pds_a_list.jsp) (Taylor [2010]), a paper entitled 'Village Deity and Sacred Text: Power-sharing and Cultural Synthesis in a Garhwal Community', submitted to *Asian Ethnology* (Taylor [forthcoming a]) and a paper entitled '"Rādhe, Rādhe!" Narrating Stories from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa in a Globalising Context' which has been submitted to *Religions of South Asia* (Taylor [forthcoming b]).

of cosmogony, theology and orthodoxy for the three major Hindu traditions of the deities Viṣṇu, Śiva and Devī. Purāṇic texts are unlikely to have been written by single authors, but grew organically as they were copied and recopied over the centuries. To borrow Wendy Doniger's simile (2009), they are like premodern Wikipedias, to which successive generations made their own additions.

Traditionally there are said to be eighteen great purāṇas (mahāpurāṇas), and the same number of secondary purāṇas (upapurāṇas), although the membership of each of these classes varies from one authority to another. In addition, there are countless lesser purāṇas in which the stories relating to individual temples, places of pilgrimage and communities are recounted. The mahāpurāṇas, the longest of which run to tens of thousands of verses, are thought to have reached their present form between the fourth and twelfth centuries of the current era.

Of the mahāpurāṇas, the best known is the Bhāgavatapurāṇa. This text centres on the deity Viṣṇu and, most significantly, on his avatar or earthly manifestation, Kṛṣṇa. The Bhāgavatapurāṇa is the major normative text for countless millions of devotees of Kṛṣṇa throughout the Indian cultural world. The tenth book of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, which accounts for one third of its total length, recounts the youthful pastimes of Kṛṣṇa among cow-herding tribes of Vraj. Many famous narratives appear in their most authoritative form in this section: Kṛṣṇa stealing the curds, overturning the cart, uprooting the two arjuna trees, destroying demons and hiding the cow-herd girls' clothes. The yearning of the cow-herding women for the preternaturally handsome youth has become a powerful metaphor for the purest and highest form of devotion to the divine that an individual may experience.[2]

According to the Bhāgavatapurāṇa's own meta-narrative, the entire discourse was first given over seven days by the sage Śuka to the king Parīkṣit as the latter lay waiting for his death as the result of a curse. Having heard this sublime account, at the very moment of death, the king achieved liberation from the endless cycle of existence, the ultimate goal of most orthodox Hindu traditions. Accordingly, week-long readings or performances of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa have acquired a special signifi-

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[2] On the purāṇas in general, see Narayana Rao (2004) and Matchett (2005). The best summaries of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa are Rocher (1986) and Bryant (2007). Goswami (2005) contains a very accurate version of the complete Sanskrit text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa with an accurate if quaint English translation. On the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, see Schweig (2007b) and especially a new translation by Bryant (2004).

cance. Known as *Bhāgavata-saptāha* ('Bhāgavata-week') in Sanskrit or simply as *saptāh* in Hindi, the week-long performance is said to confer liberation on both the chief sponsor and the audience. The reasons given for holding a *saptāh* in its contemporary form include the salvation and honouring of the sponsor's deceased forebears and relatives.

Saptāh: *A Week-Long Purāṇic Performance*

How is a *saptāh* carried out? A comprehensive set of instructions for a week-long oral performance of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is given in the Śrīmad-bhāgavata-māhātmya ('The greatness of the glorious Bhāgavata[purāṇa]') (Goswami [2005: BhP 0.6.1–103]). This short text of six chapters was originally incorporated into the Uttarakhaṇḍa section of the Padmapurāṇa, but is also included in some modern editions of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa.

According to these instructions, great care is to be taken in the selection of a suitable exponent. He should be a brahmin and a devotee of Viṣṇu who is free from worldly attachment. He should be capable of expounding on the Vedas and other authoritative texts (*śāstra*). He should be skilled in giving explanations; he must be reliable and completely free from desires. Certain types of people are to be avoided: those who are attracted by other traditions, those who are excessively interested in women, and heretics, even if they are well educated. The exponent should be provided with a seconder to help him 'dispel doubts and enlighten the public' (0.6.20–22).

The exponent should begin his recital at sunrise and should speak in a 'suitably moderated tone' for three-and-a-half watches, the equivalent of 10–11 hours. There should be a one-hour break at midday, during which devotees sing praises of Viṣṇu. A single light meal should be eaten each day so that the exposition need not be interrupted by toilet breaks. The instructions suggest that people should fast for the full week, or take a diet of milk, ghee, fruit, vegetables and just a single type of grain. Sensibly, however, they say that fasting should not stand in the way of listening to the exposition. If fasting detracts from one's ability to listen attentively for a week, it should be moderated (0.6.38–43).

Letters should to addressed to everyone, inviting them to this 'exceedingly rare congregation of the pious' (0.6.8). All are welcome to 'drink the nectar of the glorious Bhāgavata [purāṇa]' (0.6.9). The instructions specifically mention promoting the event among 'people who stand

remote from the stories of [Viṣṇu] and the chanting of Viṣṇu's praises', including 'women, those of low caste (śūdras), etc' (0.6.6). This distinguishes the Bhāgavatapurāṇa from other master-texts of the Sanskritic archive, which are explicitly the preserve of 'high'-caste males.

What was the language of the pre-modern *saptāh*? In the absence of concrete evidence, some assumptions may be made. There are two possibilities: Sanskrit only, or a blend of Sanskrit and the vernacular. Sanskrit has long been the language of elite scholarly and spiritual discourse (Pollock [2006]). The archetypal *saptāh* may have been conducted exclusively in Sanskrit, as such an event was described as a 'congregation of the pious', in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa's own words. It is possible that the expositor read, recited or chanted verses in Sanskrit only. It is also possible that he explained verses in spoken Sanskrit, with the occasional assistance of his seconder, in the style of the prose commentaries that accompany many important Sanskrit texts.

It is usually assumed that most women and members of 'low' castes did not understand Sanskrit, but we have already seen that they were explicitly invited to attend. If the narration were performed in Sanskrit only, these people may have acquired religious merit simply by hearing the discourse. The belief in the power and efficacy of sacred sound, with meaning as a poor cousin, is widespread in Hindu traditions. Further, the idea that one must understand the sacred word in order to benefit from it is perhaps an Orientalist habit of mind rooted in the Protestant traditions of Europe. On the other hand, if the aim of the performance is to impart religious knowledge rather than just religious merit, this could only be achieved with the vernacular. It seems likely therefore that the event was delivered in a mixture of Sanskrit and the vernacular or largely in the vernacular with a smattering of Sanskrit verses as is the case today. For, as the sponsor of the event asked, 'What is the point of telling stories in Sanskrit if no one can understand them?'

The study of the purāṇas in the West has historically been a philological exercise, with an exclusive focus on the textual. The concept that oral traditions are 'the single most dominant communication technology of our species' (Foley [1999: 1]) and the notion that these may shed light on our understanding of the purāṇic tradition are just beginning to dawn on Western students of Indology. Yet, in many parts of India, the *saptāh* is an important and prominent feature of religious life. No fewer than twenty such events were advertised in the Vaiṣṇava pilgrimage town of Vrindavān in 2009 alone (Taylor [2010]). A Google search on the Hindi words 'Bhagavat saptah' and related terms yields almost ten thousand

hits. Over one thousand *saptāh*-related videos are available on Youtube. To my knowledge no scholarly attempt has yet been made to explore the contemporary oral performance of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa and its ambient cultural practices. This study forms part of an ongoing investigation into the sources of power and authority that enable Sanskrit master-texts to function as 'true' discourse (Taylor [2007], [2008a], [2008b], [2008c], [forthcoming c]).

The Saptāh *at Naluna*

A seven-day oral performance of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa was held at Naluna, Uttarakhand, in November 2009. Naluna is a private estate on the Gaṅgā about one hour's drive north of Uttarkashi, in the district of Garhwal, set among steep Himalayan foothills and scattered mountain villages.[3] The sponsor of the event and the owner of the estate was an Australian national of Indian descent, who divides his time equally between his two homelands. The site of the performance was a brightly decorated marquee in the garden of the estate. Half a dozen simple chandeliers were suspended from the roof, and lengths of green synthetic carpet were rolled out on the ground. A colourful backdrop depicting a fantastic Chinoiserie landscape was suspended around the perimeter as a make-shift wall. The exponent's throne was on a low stage at the front of the marquee, and to the left was a space for the musicians and honoured guests.

The exponent, Śrī Badrī Prasād Nautiyāl Jī Śāstrī, was a middle-aged brahmin from a village near Naluna. He had studied for five years in a 'university' which specialised in Bhāgavatapurāṇa recitations in Vrindāvan. This was the sixth *saptāh* at which he had officiated since he graduated. Every afternoon at about 1.30, he took his seat on the stage. The audience, consisting of villagers who had walked for one to two hours from their homes, sat on the ground in the marquee, men and women separately. Numbers of attendees rose during the week to a peak of about 150 during the final days. Each session commenced with a round of invocations and sacred songs. The exponent then proceeded to relate episodes from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa to the audience in

[3] On the religion and culture of Garhwal, see Alter (2008); Berreman (1962), (1964), and (1972 [1963]); and Sax (1990), (1991), (2002), and (2009).

Garhwali-accented Hindi, occasionally singing a key verse from the text in Sanskrit, which he then translated and expounded upon. From time to time the audience would join enthusiastically in the singing of sacred songs, while clapping their hands in time. Each session concluded at about 4.30 pm with another round of communal singing. A tray of sacred burning lamps was offered to the throne and was passed around as a blessing (*ārtī*), and blessed food (*prasād*) was distributed.

Many features of the *saptāh* at Naluna were unique, especially those relating to the fire-offering rituals (*havan*) and the role of the local deity (Taylor [2010], [forthcoming a], [forthcoming b]). The actual narrative technique of the exponent was strongly reminiscent of other performances seen elsewhere in North India (Taylor [forthcoming b]). The patterning of the narration, the accompaniment of flute and harmonium, the general pitch, the rise and fall of the exponent's intonation, and even his mannerisms, were all similar to those observed on the plains.[4]

As there is only about one *saptāh* per year in the district of Naluna, the week-long performance was a major event in the religious calendar. It was also important as a social event. The mood during the week was festive, joyous and celebratory. No doubt the sweet semolina pudding and community feast provided on the final day were additional attractions.

The *saptāh* was an important site for the enactment and replication of the social roles of caste, class and gender. It provided an opportunity for the sponsor to accumulate social capital and enhance his status and reputation as a benefactor and a 'big man' in the community. It served to reinforce the social status of brahmins as ritual specialists. In addition to being financially rewarding for the brahmins, many other local people were employed in the preparation and conduct of the event as labourers, cooks, carriers, builders and musicians. As such, the *saptāh*, the total cost of which was US$ 5000, represented a substantial injection of money into the local largely subsistence economy.

The *saptāh* enabled individuals to acquire religious merit, and was a major site of production and reception of normative religious discourse. This is where discourse was exerted and experienced at the 'capillary' level, to use a Foucauldian term. The explicit message of the week-long

[4] Video recordings of Bādrī Prasād Śāstrī giving a kathā session at Naluna are available at http://alturl.com/5gyf. A 35-minute documentary of the saptāh is available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCoUw_lnhYg.

event was that hearing stories about 'God' (*Bhagavān Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa*) would expunge sins, dispel misery, bestow happiness, and make life 'fortunate' (*dhanya*). Its implicit function was to inculcate the beliefs of the Kṛṣṇa-focussed Vaiṣṇava traditions of the Vallabha and Gauḍīya lineages, to perpetuate the spiritual practices associated with these lineages, and to attract and retain devotees: in short, to augment religious capital.

What was the role of the text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa in the week-long event? In addition to being the raison d'être for the occasion, the text fulfilled four functions. First, it was a key focus of ritual action. Second, it was the ultimate source of the structure and content of the event. Third, it was central to the act of *pārāyaṇa*, or silent reading. Finally, it was the source of many of the Sanskrit quotations used by the exponent in his narration. I will conclude by suggesting ways in which these four aspects all function together to exert a particular effect on the discourse.

The Text and Ritual Action

In pre-modern times, Sanskrit manuscripts were written on oblong strips of palm-leaf or birch bark. Even with the advent of modern printing technology, the oblong format is still adopted for some religious texts. The edition of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa used by the exponent at Naluna was a hefty volume in this traditional format, measuring 500 mm in length, 200 mm in width and 100 mm in height.

The exponent and his party arrived at Naluna at 11:30 am on the first day of the *saptāh*. An older man accompanying him carried the Bhāgavatapurāṇa wrapped in crimson velour on his head (Figure 1). The exponent and the text were greeted, honoured and garlanded at the gate, and were then escorted into the marquee. The text was placed on a low table in the marquee and was honoured by various individuals with a small basket of offerings, garlands of marigolds and ten-rupee notes (Figure 2).

The two important preliminary rituals, the Kalaśasthāpana ('Establishing the pitchers') and the Saṃkalpa ('Statement of intent'), were conducted in the marquee at the foot of the table on which the text was placed. These concluded with a procession around the pavilion where the fire-offering ritual was to be conducted. During the procession, the text was borne on the head of the sponsor's elderly father.

Figure 1. The exponent Śrī Badrī Prasād Nautiyāl Jī Śāstrī (centre) arrives at Naluna with an unidentified assistant carrying the text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa on his head

Figure 2. The text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, wrapped in red velour, is honoured with incense, garlands and bank-notes

Figure 3. The exponent on his throne. A wandering ascetic and two musicians are seated on the left. The text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is immediately in front of the exponent under a heap of garlands

On being returned to the marquee, the text was placed on a raised altar in front of the exponent. As musicians sang sacred songs in praise of Kṛṣṇa, a young ritual specialist (*pūjārī*) made an offering of a tray of lights and incense to the text while the exponent began to read the text in silence. Using the middle finger of his right hand, the pūjārī marked the cover of the book with a spot of red sandal-paste.

When arriving or leaving the event, attendees performed a wide range of ritual actions in front of the text: bowing down, touching the altar or the text with their hands or foreheads, prostrating themselves, throwing grains or petals, placing flowers, fruits or money, honouring with palms joined (*añjali*), 'circumambulating' (turning around 360 degrees while standing on the spot with hands held in an *añjali*), and so on.

On several occasions during the week the exponent stated emphatically that the text was not just a book, a text or a collection of stories, but was the Lord (*Bhagavān*) Himself in physical form, a claim also made in the text (0.6.66–68). Any ritual act performed to the text is the equivalent

of the same act made directly to God. The text represented the presence of the divine in physical form.

An anecdote will further illustrate the great significance attached to the text as a sacred object. During each session I sat at the back of the marquee and followed the progress of the narration by referring to a two-volume copy of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa. At one point I had placed one of the volumes on my folded jacket on the ground next to my seat. Noticing this, the exponent interrupted his exposition and, to my mortification, called out to me in Hindi, 'Do not put that near your feet'. Chastened, I hastily retrieved the volume and kept it safely in my lap thereafter.

At the conclusion of the final day of the event, the sponsor, accompanied by the village deity, reverently carried the text on his head from the marquee to the vehicle which would take the exponent home again.

Text as Source of Structure and Content

In addition to being the focus of ritual action, the text also provided the structure and content for the narratives of the seven days. The plan of the exponent's narration, which roughly followed the order of events in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, is given in Appendix 1. The entire extent of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa was covered from beginning to end, but the rate at which the exponent progressed varied greatly from topic to topic. Sometimes he elaborated on a single episode at great length, while at other times he traversed vast tracts of narrative terrain in a sentence or two.

The first day set the scene for the following narratives. The efficacy of listening to narratives from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa was described by means of an allegorical parable found in the Māhātmya. A young woman named Bhakti ('Devotion') and her two sons, Jñāna and Vairāgya ('Knowledge' and 'Dispassion'), were prematurely aged and emaciated. Simply by hearing a week-long narration of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, all three were rejuvenated and reinvigorated.

The second and third days provided the 'historical' background to the week-long narrative. These included the biographies of the main meta-narrator of the story, Śuka, and of the king Parīkṣit, to whom the Bhāgavatapurāṇa was originally told. The fourth and fifth days were dedicated to narratives in which devotion to the deity Viṣṇu and his various avatars were shown to be rewarded. The first five days served as a prelude to the climax, which was reached on the sixth and seventh

days. This consisted of narratives concerning the avatar Kṛṣṇa, set among cow-herding peoples of Vraj. The best-known stories of Kṛṣṇa's childhood pranks, and his youthful love-making among the cow-herding women were included here.

The narration was not restricted to the Bhāgavatapurāṇa but drew on other master-texts of contemporary Hinduism, such as the Bhagavadgītā and Rāmcaritmānas. In addition to narration, the exponent included a certain amount of contemporary sermonising. There was also a distinctive local element to the narration. As the event was located right on the banks of the Gaṅgā, that deity was frequently invoked and honoured, as was the local village deity Kaṇḍār, under whose auspices the event was held.

Silent Reading or Pārāyaṇa

The first session began with the musicians singing sacred songs while the exponent, seated on the throne, read silently the six chapters of the Māhātmya section of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa. In the days that followed, from about 5.30 am in the freezing pre-dawn gloom until 11.00 every morning, the exponent, wrapped up against the cold, sat alone in the marquee and read, or at least glanced through, the entire eighteen thousand verses of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa, at the rate of one or two books (*skandha*) per day. His stated purpose was that the stories should be fresh in his mind, but there was also a ritual function: 'Don't worry if you don't hear it. Just reading it will bring benefits. It helps to continue the tradition.' The exponent described reading the text quickly 'in his mind' (*mānasik*) as a 'sacred act'. It seems that the event could not be considered complete unless the text was read in entirety.

According to a South Indian informant who attended the saptāh and who has experience with the tradition in Bangalore, a week-long event may consist solely of *pārāyaṇa*. A benefactor may sponsor a traditional scholar (*vidvān*) to undertake such a silent reading in a private residence, without the need for any further exposition (A. Rao, pers. comm.) At another week-long event at Govardhan in November 2009, two traditional scholars were seated on the stage silently reading the Bhāgavatapurāṇa while the exponent delivered his narration. They appeared to be reading in great haste, and I was led to understand that they were required to complete the reading by the time the main oral narration finished.

The practice of *pārāyaṇa* is not mentioned in the original instructions for a *saptāh*, but has become an important and integral part of contemporary performance, and was a feature of most of the saptāh events for which I have data. *Pārāyaṇa* seems to be a nod to the instructions' requirement or expectation of a complete reading. As the whole text is not or cannot be read aloud, the requirement of a complete reading can at least be met in part through *pārāyaṇa*.

Role of the Text in the Vernacular Oral Performance

The contemporary saptāh is embedded in ritual action focussed on the text; it derives its structure and contents from the text in a broad sense; and it is legitimated by silent reading of the complete narrative, but it is far from being a public reading or recital of the Sanskrit text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa itself. Except when the text was being used for *pārāyaṇa* or some other ritual purpose, it sat at all other times on the altar, tightly wrapped in red velour and garlanded with marigolds. In fact, the actual source of much of the exponent's performance seemed to be a white exercise book which he kept in his lap, and at which he glanced occasionally during his discourses. Unfortunately, I had no opportunity to examine this source closely. It appeared to include the key Sanskrit verses and the episodes from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa which formed the kernel of each day's delivery. Further field work would undoubtedly cast light on this.

Rather than a Sanskrit recital, the contemporary event at Naluna, like those elsewhere, was a vernacular oral performance embellished with occasional Sanskritic elements. A typical three-hour session included as few as four verses from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa or as many as a dozen. The verses were not necessarily drawn from the text in the order in which they appeared. For example, on the first day, the exponent began with a verse from the second chapter of the Māhātmya on the accumulation of merit (0.2.76), before returning at a later time to the opening verses in praise of Kṛṣṇa (0.1.1).

There is a high level of basic literacy in the community around Naluna, but this is confined exclusively to the Hindi language. Some of the educated Brahmins and men of the Rajput community are able to read Sanskrit, but it is unlikely that anyone in the audience could have understood verses from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa without some explanation. If the Sanskrit verses are not readily understood in their own right, what function

do they play? What effect do they have on the discourse and its reception by the audience? In the following paragraphs I will provide four examples of different ways in which the exponent used Sanskrit verses from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa in his delivery.

In the first two examples, the actual meaning of the Sanskrit verses served as the source and the basis for a lengthy discourse on the benefits of listening to a Bhāgavatapurāṇa recital and on the nature of God, respectively. In the third example, the meaning of the Sanskrit verse was somewhat significant but, more importantly, it was used to mark the start of a discrete narrative unit. In the fourth example, the meaning seemed secondary, and the exponent translated it only in part. In this case it was the performative aspects of the verse that were significant. The verse served to break up a long interval of spoken dialogue and provided variation in pace and tone to hold the audience's attention.

In the following, the Sanskrit verse from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is shown in italics, and the exponent's vernacular explanation and elaboration are given in plain text:

> Sir, as the great Bhāgavat-jī says—as our saintly men say: {Sings:} '*When a person comes into association with the pious as the result of rising good fortune accumulated though many lifetimes …*'[5] {Speaks:} '*As the result of rising good fortune accumulated though many lifetimes*'. As the result of many, many lifetimes, we gain an accumulation of merit. Through many lifetimes an accumulation of merit exists for us. We make this accumulation. We make it well. Then, having sat down for the stories of the Lord, having come for the stories of the Lord, there is support for us. '*As the result of rising good fortune accumulated though many lifetimes*.' Having made an accumulation of merit through many lifetimes, then we have the support [to hear] the stories of the Lord. Having come for the stories of the Lord, there will be support. And further, Sir, having come for the stories, then for us, having dispersed all of the many miseries in our lives, this story, which is like a mother, having brought us into her own presence, destroys all the miseries in our lives. For us, O Lord, for us, this mother-like story, having taken us into her lap, is the result of the accumulation of merit though many lifetimes. There will be an association with the pious. And when we come into the association with the pious, when we come to hear the stories of the Lord, and having heard the stories, it will cause our lives to be filled with bliss.

[5] The complete verse reads as follows: 'When a person comes into association with the pious as the result of rising good fortune accumulated though many lifetimes, then having destroyed the darkness of delusion and pride caused by the agency of ignorance, pure knowledge arises.' *bhāgodayena bahujanmasamarjitena satsaṅgamaṃ ca labhate puruṣo yadi vai | ajñānahetukṛtamohamadāndhakāranāśaṃ vidhāya hi tadodayate vivekaḥ ||* (0.2.76).

In the first instance, the Sanskrit sections were sung (as indicated in the transcript above), but when the exponent repeated them, he adopted a dramatic, declarative register, as distinct from a more natural speaking voice in which the bulk of the discourse was delivered. Thus he used performative vocal techniques to distinguish, emphasise and elevate the Sanskrit passages.

The above passage represents about two minutes of spoken performance, or about one-third of the total exposition of this one verse. The exponent returned a number of times to the original Sanskrit wording, while expanding on the basic message that one is very fortunate to hear the Bhāgavatapurāṇa and that hearing it will be of great benefit.

One point of interest is the way in which the exponent referred to the text. The respectful form 'Bhāgavat-jī' was used in the feminine gender, and, as we saw, the Bhāgavatapurāṇa was likened to a mother who took the audience into her lap. I am aware of no other such personification of a Sanskrit document. It is even more surprising that in such a highly patriarchal episteme the feminine and maternal metaphors are used. One suggestion is that as Garhwal, the district in which Naluna is located, is the first abode of Gaṅgā Mā ('Mother Ganges'), perhaps the pervasive influence of the river as a physical entity and as a female deity has served to validate and empower the feminine in this case.

To turn to my second example: about twenty minutes into his discourse on the first day of the *saptāh*, the exponent began by describing how the *sūta*, the wandering sage who is traditionally said to have first narrated most of the purāṇas, approached the great seer Śaunaka in the Naimiṣa forest. The *sūta*, the seer and the forest are three formulaic elements that are essential for establishing the canonical setting for any purāṇic narrative. The exponent then sang this verse, which is the first verse of the introductory section of the Māhātmya of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa:

> We exult Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is goodness, consciousness and bliss,
> who is the cause of creation and so on and who destroys the three-fold affliction.[6]

At the end of the verse, he improvised a little by singing again the final half-line. Then he asked:

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[6] *saccidānandarūpāya viśvotpattyādihetave | tāpatrayavināśāya śrīkṛṣṇāya vayaṃ numaḥ* |(BhP 0.1.1).

> What is the meaning of this verse on goodness, consciousness and bliss? Sir, we should practise goodness, we should perform good actions. Among the three characteristics of goodness, consciousness and bliss, goodness is reality. What is reality? What is this in the world? The Supreme one is the reality in the present, and was the reality in the past, and will be the reality in the future.

Here he inserted a Sanskrit phrase, *satyaṃ paraṃ dhīmahi*, 'Let us meditate on the Supreme reality', which is actually part of the first verse of the first book of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa proper (BhP 1.1.1). He did not gloss this in Hindi as it would easily be understood by any educated Hindu. The effect of inserting this simple Sanskrit phrase may have been to remind the audience that reality (*satyam*) is a basic canonical term which they would instantly recognise in this context. There followed a lengthy and substantial discourse on the nature of the divine.

The second example is drawn from another allegorical parable in the Māhātmya, the story of the brahmin Ātmadeva, who is redeemed from a series of heinous crimes merely by hearing a recitation of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa. The exponent opened his account of this story by glancing at the notebook in his lap, and sang the following Sanskrit verse:

> On the banks of the Tuṅgabhadrā, in former times, there was an excellent town, where the [four] castes (*varṇas*) were intent upon truth and good actions in accordance with their own traditions (*dharma*).[7]

I note that he stumbled a little over the verse, and misread a number of syllables, which is easy enough to do in a public performance, but which also raises the question of how well he understood the original Sanskrit text. In any case, on completing the verse, he then spoke in Hindi, 'On the banks of the Tuṅgbhadrā River there was a village. In this village, there lived many people of the four castes. There lived quite a few respectable people. There lived wise people. In this village was a brahmin by the name of Ātmadeva.' The exponent did not provide a true translation of the verse, but drew elements from it selectively, and expanded on it in ways not supported by the original. Here the function of the Sanskrit text is to mark an important juncture in the discourse and the beginning of a discrete narrative unit. The meaning of the verse was apparently not as important as its function as a performative marker.

[7] *tuṅgabhadrātaṭe pūrvam abhūt pattanam uttamam* | *yatra varṇāḥ svadharmeṇa satyasatkarmatatparāḥ* | (BhP 0.4.16).

Let us now turn to the fourth and final example of the use of a Sanskrit verse, also from the first day of the saptāh. In this case the exponent used a verse in his vernacular retelling of the allegorical parable of Nārada's meeting with Mā Bhakti and her two sons. This story occupies the first three chapters of the Māhātmya (a total of 230 verses). Its discursive purpose is to illustrate the rejuvenative power of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa and its capacity to stimulate flagging religious devotion. In this story, as mentioned above, the celestial sage and divine messenger Nārada was wandering from his retreat in the Himālaya towards Vṛndāvan, when he met the young woman Bhakti (which means 'devotion') and her two sons, Jñāna ('knowledge') and Vairāgya ('dispassion'). The sons, although young in years, looked aged and decrepit. Up to this point, the exponent had related the story in Hindi, but at the point in the story when the woman hailed the sage the exponent sang the appropriate Sanskrit verse from the Bhāgavatapurāṇa:

> Hail, hail, holy man! Stay a moment, and dispel my worries. The sight of you is the supreme means of completely removing the suffering of the world.[8]

After the exponent sang the whole verse in Sanskrit, he then recited the first half line (*pāda*) again in a speaking voice, 'Hail, hail, holy man! Stay a moment' (*bho bhoḥ sādhu kṣaṇaṃ tiṣṭha*), and glossed it in the vernacular, translating the Sanskrit into Hindi. He then repeated each phrase with synonyms in the vernacular to make the meaning clear: 'O holy man, O Nārad-jī, for a little time, for a short period, because it is not in Nārad's nature to remain in one place, he is always wandering, the Blessed Nārad is always on the move.'

The exponent only glossed the first *pāda* and, ignoring the remaining three sections of the verse, resumed his narrative by recounting in Hindi the dialogue between Nārada and Bhakti. The remainder of the story, which the exponent completed in six minutes, describes how the mother and the two boys recover their vigour and youth merely by hearing an exposition of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa on the banks of the Gaṅgā. The implication of this allegory was clear: just as the Bhāgavatapurāṇa spiritually revitalised the characters in the story, this seven-day event at Naluna should have a similar effect on the exponent's audience.

This particular verse is not especially important or interesting from the point of view of the Bhakti narrative. It does not provide any special

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[8] *bho bhoḥ sādhu kṣaṇaṃ tiṣṭha maccintām api nāśaya | darśanaṃ tava lokasya sarvathāghaharaṃ param (BhP 0.1.42).*

insight into the situation, nor does it mark a key pivotal point in the direction of the narrative. The exponent saw no need to translate the last three half-lines. What then is the function of this verse? It is, I suggest, a performative device to provide some variation in the pace of the delivery. The sung element breaks up and ornaments the flow of the spoken delivery. We might suggest that this was the audience's response to the verse sung in Sanskrit, but it would be interesting to have the exponent's perspective here. What are his reasons for inserting a particular Sanskrit verse? How does he select verses for inclusion? These questions all suggest possibilities for further research.

To summarise the discussion of this section, the examples of ways in which the exponent used and incorporated Sanskrit verses from his narrative may be conceived of as occupying points in a field along two axes: one axis representing discursive significance, the other representing performative value. The first two examples are verses of high discursive value and moderate performative value: that is, the content of the verse provided the foundation for lengthy discourses on the benefits of hearing the Bhāgavatapurāṇa and on the nature of the divine. The discursive value of the third example was only moderate, but it served an important performative function of signalling the beginning of a new narrative unit. The fourth example was insignificant from the aspect of the inherent meaning of the verse, but was important from the view of performance as it relieved a long stretch of spoken narrative.

As Pollock suggests, in premodern times Sanskrit was the universal language of a great cosmopolis in which Indic cultures were predominant. It was the language of choice whenever an agent had something universal to say. In the contemporary Hindu thought-world, Sanskrit is still the ultimate power-language, as the 'language of the gods', the language of the master-texts and of doctrinal truth. The choice of Sanskrit elevates and empowers discursive statements (Taylor [2007: 103–106]). At Naluna, the use of Sanskrit verses also contributed to the structuring of the discourse, as the exponent frequently initiated a new theme by beginning with a verse from the original text. The inclusion of these verses also demonstrated to the audience that the exposition was clearly and firmly embedded in the original text. They served to make explicit the relationship between oral performance and the textual source. I suggest that this is a means of appropriating the inherent authority of the text. It empowers and legitimises the oral performance and facilitates its reception as 'true discourse' on the part of the audience.

Conclusion

We have seen that the text of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa plays four roles in the week-long oral performance known as a *saptāh*. The text is an important focus of ritual action. As the equivalent of 'the Lord Himself in physical form', it is honoured with lights, flowers, scents, prostrations, etc. The text 'presided' over the preliminary ceremonies and in a sense oversaw the entire event from its position on the altar in front of the exponent. Borne of the heads of various eminent men, its arrival and departure marked the beginning and end of the event respectively.

Although stories about Kṛṣṇa abound in the oral tradition and in vernacular texts, the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is the ultimate authoritative source for this tradition. The text was the source of the narratives recounted during the week, and the exponent generally adhered to the order in which the narrative units appeared in the text. In this sense, the Bhāgavatapurāṇa provided both the overall form and the content of the event.

In addition to the daily oral discourse delivered in the vernacular to the assembled audience, the exponent undertook a silent reading of the text known as *pārāyaṇa*. This served to legitimise the event first by fulfilling the requirement that the text be read in full, and second by demonstrating publicly that the exponent was reading the written text before he gave his oral performance. This conspicuous practice of *pārāyaṇa* imbued the event with a sense of 'wholeness' or 'fullness', to use Sanskritic metaphors, or legitimacy and authenticity, to use terms from critical theory. The discursive link between the spoken narratives and the Sanskrit text was then made manifest by means of selected Sanskrit verses.

I suggest that these four functions—the ritual function, the structuring function, the legitimising function of *pārāyaṇa* and the linking function of the verses—all operate in concert to exert a powerful influence on the reception of the discourse. The net effect is to validate, empower and perpetuate the beliefs and the practices of this particular Vaiṣṇava lineage. To use another Foucauldian concept, they provide a 'regime of truth' for purāṇic performance and enable the discourse to function as 'true'. This also serves to reinforce pre-existing social roles, and to allow proponents of this particular tradition to augment their religious capital in terms of donations and adherents.

Discourse creates text, and discourse is in turn created by text, but not by text alone. It appears that discourses of power are exerted through

means that are neither strictly oral nor textual. Purāṇic discourse is partly independent of language, and is activated as much by the performative aspects of the event, including the ritual and *pārāyaṇa* elements. It is as much the ambient rituals in which the oral performance is embedded that contribute to the production and reception of the discourse. The full assemblage of social and cultural practices surrounding the saptāh is, on the one hand, produced by discourse and, on the other, functions in turn to produce it.

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Appendix 1

Plan of the saptāh at Naluna, indicating the sections of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa covered each day

Day 1. Māhātmya, 'The Greatness' of the Bhāgavatapurāṇa

Day 2. Birth of Śukadeva, why he went naked (BhP 1.4); tested by Janaka; Nārada's past life as the son of a serving girl (BhP 1.6); massacre of the Pāṇḍavas' sons by Aśvatthāmā (BhP 1.7)

Day 3. Aśvatthāmā, Abhimanyu and the birth of Parīkṣit; the curse of King Parīkṣit (Book 1)

Day 4. Uddhava and Vidura; Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu; the Boar avatar; Devahūti; Kapila; Manu's daughters; Śiva and Dakṣa; Dhruva (Books 3–4)

Day 5. Bharata and the deer; Hiraṇyakaśipu and Prahrāda; Gajendra and the crocodile; Churning of the Ocean; Mohinī; Aditi asks for a boon; Bali performs yajña; Viṣṇu as Vāmana. (Books 5, 7 and 8)

Day 6. Kṛṣṇa's childhood and youth; his struggles with Kaṃsa; Kṛṣṇa overturns the cart, eats mud, steals butter, etc.; Brahmā takes the cattle; Govardhan (Book 10)

Day 7. Kṛṣṇa and the gopis, Kaṃsa's attempts to kill Kṛṣṇa, Sudāmā, Kṛṣṇa's flight to Dvārakā, marriage with Rukmiṇī (Book 10); the twenty-four gurus—very brief (Book 11) and Mārkaṇḍeya, the synopsis of the whole Bhāgavatapurāṇa, exposition of the final verse (Book 12)

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PROMPTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN EARLY PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS*

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Abstract

This paper proceeds from the idea that philosophical texts, given their ultimately transformative objectives, require of readers and auditors certain kinds of active engagement. As protreptic discourse, not only must these texts turn audiences away from conventional concerns and towards alternatives, but they must also be engaging in such a way as to help sustain the turn. In spite of ancient concerns about the limitations of writing and the dangers of engaging in certain kinds of spectacle, some of these texts suggest through the use of narrative devices that readers and spectators not merely theorize the dramatic maneuvers of philosophical dialogue but get involved with and experience, as only they themselves can, the struggles of philosophical conversion.

This paper offers a narratological study of Platonic dialogues and Isokratean discourse in order to suggest a more open view of textuality in early fourth-century philosophical practices. Rather than compositions that were intended to be read or observed in performance for the sake of interpretation, some of the Platonic dialogues and other philosophical texts of the fourth century set themselves up primarily as prompts for participation and supplemental departures. These texts prescribe or portray personal responses from audiences as the narratives which they contain are being performed. While narrated dialogues may begin as recollections of dramatic and philosophically important exchanges, they can abruptly become occasions for unscripted engagements. Bystanders are turned into respondents. Audiences are drawn into becoming performing participants. I shall demonstrate how some of Plato's narrated dialogues (*Phaedo*, *Euthydemus*) model and privilege this sort of intrusion into reported events. Isokratean discourse models how a community collaborates to revise and supplement a text over time (*Panathenaicus*). This discourse can also go so far as to prescribe rather than merely model participation and supplementation (letters to young tyrants). In these examples, philosophical retellings become prompts for personal activity in the present. This dynamic, which is internal to these texts,

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suggests a different way of viewing the pragmatics of these texts in circulation and performance. Philosophical texts, like the interrupted and revised narratives they contain, may be better viewed as open scripts which invite special kinds of departure and improvisatory supplementation.

Philosophical texts make special demands of readers and audiences. They can suggest the adoption of alternative ways of thinking or living, alternative social circles and forms of communication. That is, they have an essential protreptic function and ultimately transformative objective: the alternative should not just be turned towards but embraced.[1] How do such texts aim to foster these transformations? How can texts or performances not only persuade a reader or audience to abandon conventional ways of living, but produce the conditions necessary to embrace the alternatives?[2] I begin with the proposition that this transformation requires special kinds of engagement with philosophical discourse—engagement that involves more than analytic faculties. In order to engage the imagination, belief, memory, emotion, ambition and passion, even the muscles of the body, philosophical discourse can prescribe or model immersive modes of engagement that turn readers, auditors, and spectators into participants.

The reader or auditor must bring something of himself into conversation with the text or performance, but these must first be open to conversation. On one occasion, Sokrates famously condemns writing of all kinds—the composed *logoi* of Lysias, the poetry of Homer, the politi-

[1] The transformative function of protreptic can be rather modest in comparison with the broader transformative objectives of philosophical discourse. E.g., Sokratean discourse astounds, possesses, and upsets Alkibiades, convinces him to turn away from his political ambitions and toward his own deficiencies; and yet when he leaves Sokrates' side (and presumably when even a poor account of his discourse ends), he is once again overcome by the favors of the crowd (*Symp.*215d–216c). He is momentarily turned by protreptic but is not profoundly changed. Some suggest that this discourse could instantly leave a person like Aristippos weak but steadfastly incited, and thirsty for more (see below). In order for protreptic discourse to be transformative, engagement with it must be perhaps sustained or more profound.

[2] There are, of course, those who argue that some of these texts are merely protreptic and only suggestive of, or even in direct conflict with, esoteric, unwritten teachings. As far as Platonic dialogue and epistles are concerned, a mistrust of writing casts a shadow over texts and readings in the absence of the author (e.g., *Ep.VII* 341a–345c; cf. Isokrates, *ad Dionysium* 3); and we have ancient testimony of differences between Plato's written and unwritten teachings (e.g., *Physics* 209b14–15; see M. Isnardi Parente [1997–1998], *Testimonianza Platonica*). Our study here does not concern unwritten doctrines but unscripted participation. These narratives model and present in performance opportunities for unscripted engagement.

cal *logoi* of Solon. These writings, like paintings, are unable to converse: "if anyone asks them anything, they remain most solemnly silent … If you question anything that has been said because you want to learn more, it continues to signify [σημαίνει] just that very same thing forever" (*Phaedrus* 275d). Of course, when the author is present, he can supplement or depart from the text in order to respond to questions. When Zeno finishes reading his composition, for instance, Sokrates asks him to reread aloud the first hypothesis of the first argument, and a conversation with Zeno and then the venerable Parmenides follows.[3] When the author is not available for conversation, an auditor with unanswered questions can search his other writings. Sokrates heard a reading of one of Anaxagoras' books, and eagerly acquired and quickly read the others in search of arguments on the common good.[4] But the arguments both remained silent on the common good and ran afoul of good sense. Another option is to extrapolate the thoughts and manners of the author in his absence. Sokrates ventriloquizes the deceased Protagoras and imagines him providing helper arguments (λόγον ἐπίκουρον), speaking in defense of his written doctrines, even sticking his head up from the underworld finally to accuse his ventriloquist and auditor of talking nonsense and getting him all wrong.[5] In the absence of their living authors, these writings can appear to remain powerless to generate new discourse, to engage critics, and to satisfy the inquisitive.

But let us consider discourse that is capable of helping itself (*Phaedrus* 276e–277a). Sokrates explains that such discourse is not written in ink with a pen, but in the soul of a listener (276c)—perhaps a bit of Academic nostalgia. In any event, the written word is disparaged as an image

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[3] *Parmenides* 127aff. The transition from repetition to dialectic is highlighted by the fact that Adeimantos notes how Parmenides stepped out during the reading, and Pythodoros did not listen because he had heard Zeno read it before (127c–d). Someone secretly made a copy and circulated the composition (128d), so the discourse is repeated widely in his absence and forces publication. The dialogue begins with talk of repetitions, but transitions into conversation. For activities surrounding written publication, see Thomas (2003), Usener (1994).

[4] *Phaedo* 97b–98d. The ideas of Anaxagoras seem to have been trademarked; they have a recognizable source and a distinguishable content (*Ap.* 26d–e). Copies are available in the marketplace for a drachma.

[5] *Theaetetus* 165e–171e. Sokrates speaks as Protagoras (166a–168c), but he also asks questions of the absent Protagoras directly and gets Theodoros to answer (170a–c). He forces a substitution. Theodoros has just tried to excuse himself from the conversation (168e–169d), but Sokrates reengages him while asking an absent interlocutor, the father of the argument, to respond.

(εἴδωλον) of the living, animate word (276a). It is the living word of dialectic that is perpetually generative of other discourse (277a). And yet we have not given up hope that philosophical texts and readings—images of this generative discourse—should be generative of further discourse as well. Jacob Klein argues, "Paul Friedlander's remark 'the dialogue is the only form of book that seems to suspend the book form itself' could perhaps be elaborated on as follows: a (Platonic) dialogue has not taken place if we, the listeners or readers, did not actively participate in it; lacking such participation, all that is before us is indeed nothing but a book." Hayden Ausland adds that "while remaining conscious that we are reading a written work, we must try to take part in the dramatic occasion embodied in that work by placing the character of our own lives at least theoretically in contact with the issues that arise within the literary dialogue."[6] Ruby Blondell reproaches the auditors Eukleides and Terpsion for their lack of this sort of engagement: they "treat the reported conversation neither as a vehicle of ideas, nor as a stimulus to thought, but as a glorified specimen of philosophical gossip. As auditors, they remain completely passive, showing no interest whatsoever in actually participating in such discussions."[7] It seems that the representation of dialogic, philosophical discourse should have the potential to establish some sort of dialogic engagement with readers and auditors.

The nature of this generative engagement with texts and readings, however, remains unclear. How, exactly, is a dialogic text or performance supposed to help itself, generate more discourse, and actively engage audiences? There seems to be some consensus that, at the very least, read-

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[6] Klein (1965) in Ausland (1997: 389).

[7] Blondell (2002: 306). This passivity is made all the more striking by the complex process of narration, abridgement (ὑπομνήματα), expansion, remembrance and reperformance, collaborative revision, and consolidation that is the activity of composition which Eukleides describes in the prologue (*Tht.* 142c–143c). Tarrant (2010) suggests that this prologue—an alternative to a different "rather frigid" prologue "consisting of an almost equal number of lines" according to ancient testimony (Anon. *Tht.* III.28–37)—must provide clues about Plato's own methods (16 n. 26), i.e., that the problems with dramatic, mimetic presentation enumerated in *Rep.* III have now been solved by (1) the involvement of lectors, (2) the dramatization of idealized speakers, and (3) the controlling voice of Sokrates that sanctions imitation (15). Surely, not all of the characters who Sokrates imitates can be safely imitated by others (e.g., Euthydemos). Nevertheless, Tarrant argues that the dialogue was initially sketched in dramatic form, revised into a near-final narrated version, and then returned to a dramatic form with a prologue that notes the filter of Socratic narration (16). We can infer from this process that it should be even more remarkable to us that Eukleides and Terpsion do not engage with the reported discussion; it has been composed for participation.

ers should meditate on the relevance to their own lives of the issues taken up in the dialogue. In this way, readers theorize the dialogues; contact with their issues is intellectual. David Blank argues that audiences of dialogues should also feel so *emotionally* engaged that they will want "to follow more conversations, and even to participate in some themselves."[8] Dialogic, philosophical discourse can engage the emotions and generate the desire for participation in further discourse. Dramatized dialectic should also raise ideas and prompt reflection of the sort that cannot be contained: Eukleides and Terpsion should have interrupted the reading and said something. They should have reminded us they were there, that Sokrates' narration was meant to provoke a response. This participation has volume; it is disruptive; and we shall see that this disruption is dramatic.

In this paper I shall begin to build a case for an alternative view of certain philosophical texts in performance. I am not interested here in whether these texts were performed or not, although I suspect they were in a variety of ways.[9] Instead, I rely on a largely literary and narratological study of Platonic dialogues and Isokratean discourse in order to suggest a more open view of textuality in the hands of readers and performers.[10] Rather than compositions that were intended to be read at a distance, faithfully replicated, and interpreted, some of the Platonic dialogues and other philosophical texts of the fourth century set themselves up primarily as prompts for participation and supplemental departures. These texts not only portray and solicit a personal response from an audience as they are being performed, but they offer to incorporate that response. While narrated dialogues may begin as recollections of dramatic and philosophically important exchanges, they can abruptly become occasions for unscripted, impassioned, and unsettling

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8 Blank (1993: 437).

9 Cf. Plutarch *Mor.*711cd, Athenaeus 9.381f–382a. For a discussion of different arguments about the relationship of Platonic dialogue to performance, see de Vries (1984). On the dramatic qualities of the dialogues, see Tarrant (1955b), Blondell (2002), McCabe (2008b).

10 For other narratological approaches to Platonic dialogue, see Halperin (1992); Blondell (2002); Tarrant (1955b), and (1955a) on extended uses of *oratio obliqua* which lapse into *oratio recta* and the attraction of relative clauses into infinitive constructions. Teichmüller (1879), Taylor (1929), and Tarrant (1955b) reorder the publication of the dialogues according to a development and decline of narrative structure. Halperin (1992) argues that by means of the ambiguity produced by the interplay of his often contradictory doctrines and the characters who present them, Plato charms us into a commitment to the activity of carefully interpreting written texts.

engagements. Bystanders are turned into respondents; audiences are drawn into becoming participants. I shall demonstrate how some of Plato's narrated dialogues (*Phaedo*, *Euthydemus*) model this sort of provocation and directly privilege this sort of intrusion into reported events. Isokratean discourse models how a community collaborates to modify and supplement a text over time (*Panathenaicus*). This discourse can also go so far as to prescribe rather than merely model participation and supplementation (letters to young tyrants). I shall draw on these other kinds of philosophical texts in order to suggest that we might, with the relatively closed model of textuality, be missing an important part, perhaps the most important part, of the ancient experience of philosophical discourse and inquiry.[11]

First, though, a brief note on what I mean by texts "modeling" more immersive engagements with themselves. I will later explain how narratives embedded within narratives can contaminate their frames, and frames their contents. But there is potential for a related phenomenon between the world of the text and the world of the reader or auditor. When "the activity of narrating . . . and the activity of reading or listening or transcribing are palpably represented within the text," writes Bernard Duyfhuizen, "[they] not only mark the text's form but also contribute to its themes and our acts of reading and interpreting those themes".[12] The representation of reception and transmission within a text or performance may determine, or provide a model for, the reader's or audience's reception of that text or performance. Readers may not discern narrative transmission, or decide that it is not relevant to the experience and meaning of the text. But presumably the author or authors choose their words carefully and believe otherwise.[13] A sensitivity to such modeling is not always strictly analytical. Recognizing an analogy between activities of transmission within and outside the text can require logic: the reader must draw parallels between the representation of narrative activity and the activity of reading. But if a narrator urges a narratee within the text

[11] For a range of later pedagogical procedures and amateur engagements with Platonic texts, see Snyder (2000: 93–121). These professional textual engagements revolve around the production and use of secondary literature—commentaries and abridgements. But the dialogues can be and were read also for fun and entertainment (93–94). And they could very well sit idle on the shelves of thoughtful and pretentious people alike.

[12] Duyfhuizen (1992: 17).

[13] Narrative transmission in the works of Plato is often found in fictional prologues that describe the preparation of the main narrative for an auxiliary audience. The possible addition and evolution of these prefaces are of historical interest; e.g., see Tarrant (2010).

to participate in, rather than merely be a spectator of, his ongoing narrative, then a reader or auditor of that text might just be prompted to make a correlating shift from spectator to participant, from interpreter to contributor.[14]

I. *Turning Bystanders into Participants*

We can piece together various pictures of how questioners and respondents behave and should behave in philosophical investigation. The Eleatic Stranger of *Sophist* explains that questioners "cross-examine someone when he thinks he's saying something though he's saying nothing. Then, since his opinions will vary inconsistently, these people will easily scrutinize them. They collect his opinions together during the discussion, put them side by side, and show that they conflict with each other at the same time on the same subjects in relation to the same things and in the same respects" (230b; trans. White). In *Theaetetus*, we learn that the questioner reveals these contradictions earnestly, in a just manner (that is, consistent with his care for virtue), and in a helpful and restorative way (ἐπανορθοῖ, 167e). The fact that the questioner targets personal opinions and contradictions means that he also requires that the respondent often take a stand, be sincere, and say what he believes.[15] The

[14] The connections between activities represented in the world of the text and activities in the world of the reader may not require calculation at all: "When we witness someone else's action, we activate a network of parietal and premotor areas that is also active while we perform similar actions ... Thus, the understanding of basic aspects of social cognition depends on activation of neural structures normally involved in our own personally experienced actions or emotions. By means of this activation, a bridge is created between others and ourselves. With this mechanism we do not just 'see' or 'hear' an action or an emotion. Side by side with the sensory description of the observed social stimuli, internal representations of the state associated with these actions or emotions are evoked in the observer, 'as if' they were performing a similar action or experiencing a similar emotion" (Gallese et al. [2004: 400]).

[15] Vlastos (1994) argues that the questioner rarely allows the besieged respondent to "[shift] from combatant to bystander" (10). He describes the "double objective" of this elenchus: "to discover how every human being ought to live *and* to test that single human being who is doing the answering—to find out if *he* is living as one ought to live" (10). The latter objective is, he says, "therapeutic"; and it is often through investigating the respondent's own life that the former objective, which is "philosophical", is achieved. Vlastos (1983) schematizes aspects of this process in what he calls the standard elenchus. Cf. Vlastos (1991: 111). For other accounts of these objectives and what they require, see Scott (2002: esp. 145–157 [the discussion by Brickhouse and Smith]). Nehamas (1999) maintains that what separates a dialectician from other kinds of questioners like eristics has less to do with method and more to do with purpose (115).

respondent, in turn, grows angry with himself, the Eleatic explains, because he sees that his *aporia* is a result of his own contradictory beliefs; he grows gentle towards others, and he turns to philosophy. This way of engaging in philosophical dialogue might make for good philosophy, although I am not even sure that is the case, but it certainly does not make for good drama. The dialogues rarely portray this kind of activity.[16] Respondents and even dialecticians often engage in spectacular grandstanding and wildly disingenuous behavior.[17]

Now, what is the proper role of an audience at such appropriate and inappropriate spectacles? How do and should bystanders witness such events? The dialogues are full of spectators. There are characters who are present for the conversation and who sometimes get involved themselves. And there are audiences to reported dialogues who imagine themselves present at past events. A narrator can use referential and dramatic devices to make the earlier events so vivid that the audience sees and hears the conversation *as though they are present*; I will have more to say about these audiences of narrative below. As for audiences who are present for the investigation, the Eleatic Stranger explains that the spectacle of philosophical scrutiny produces pleasure in the listener (ἀκούειν τε ἡδίστην, 230c). The young men who follow Sokrates around Athens, whom he is accused of corrupting, "take pleasure," Sokrates says, "in hearing people questioned" (χαίρουσιν ἀκούοντες ἐξεταζομένων τῶν ἀνθρώπων) to the extent that "they themselves often imitate me and try to question others" (*Ap.*23c). These young men "enjoy hearing those being questioned who think they are wise, but are not" (33c). The bystanders enjoy the spectacle of scrutiny, and *try* to reproduce it.[18] But

[16] Blank (1993) carefully pieces together evidence of questioners, respondents, and bystanders in Platonic dialogue in order to argue that it aims principally at an emotional effect. Witnessing dialectic is analogous to watching theater: "The audience's violent emotions are aroused and then purged by seeing the representation of the characters' misfortunes and emotions" (434) and the "heightened emotions [of the interlocutors and listeners] eventually lead them to the cathartic experience of *aporia*, to the pleasure which results from this *aporia*, and to the new-found willingness to learn which now takes the place of their prejudice and braggadocio" (436). Dialogue may arouse different emotions in respondents and bystanders, but the *aporia* is contagious. I am drawing attention to episodes that model a more radical connection between respondents and bystanders, characters and auditors, texts and readers. Dialogue can not only arouse and perhaps purge emotions in spectators, but rather provoke spectators to become participants in what they are watching. The fourth wall is broken. On a direct connection between Aristotle's *katharsis* and *Phaedo*, see Gallop (2003: 328–332).

[17] Cf. Gagarin (2001).

[18] On the inimitable Sokrates, see Nehamas (1998).

is this the appropriate role for an audience? In the context of Sokrates' defense, this pleasure and this attempt at imitation seem wildly inappropriate and clearly have grave historical consequences. Moreover, what is the philosophical use of witnessing an activity that is tailored to and is meant entirely to work on someone else's beliefs and emotions?

The dialogues present a range of alternative responses from spectators who witness philosophical scrutiny. I will touch on two that seem to establish very different kinds of spectating from the problematic pleasure-imitation model in *Sophist* and *Apology* before focusing on a third which I believe is the most suggestive of a more open view of textuality. The first response is that of spectators-turned-participants, Ktesippos and Kallikles, and the second is that of Alkibiades as sometimes-participant-sometimes-spectator. The first response occurs while witnessing Socratic questioning but the second response can occur while witnessing the *representation* of Socratic discourse. Alkibiades' response is what one would expect of spectators of what Paul Woodruff (2008) describes as theater of presence. That is, Alkibiades begins by witnessing something mimetic but ends up participating in something that is real (34).

First, let us consider Ktesippos and Kallikles—two very different personalities with different motives and commitments, but both jumping out of the role of spectator and into that of participant. Ktesippos' role as quintessential spectator is highlighted at the beginning of *Euthydemus*. Sokrates, Ktesippos' favorite Kleinias, and the two eristic acrobats are sitting in the palaestra surrounded by Kleinias' lovers and the followers of Euthydemos and Dionysodoros, when Euthydemos leans forward in speaking to Sokrates and obscures Ktesippos' view of Kleinias. Ktesippos "desiring to view [βουλόμενός τε οὖν θεάσασθαι] his beloved and being fond of listening [φιλήκοος]" gets up and sits right opposite Kleinias, thereby prompting everyone else there to gather around. Ktesippos prompts a formation of an impromptu performance space.[19] But it is not long before he rushes into the contest between the eristics and Sokrates. A bit of eristic cleverness calls his affection for his beloved into question, and he, now violently irritated (ἠγανάκτησέν, 283e), begins to answer the set-pieces of the sophists, and grows increasingly abusive (λοιδορῇ, 284e; cf. 288b) and savage (ἀγριωτέρως, 285a). He likens undergoing eristic inquiry to being skinned alive, and offers

[19] On the prominent role of space and background in *Phaedrus*, see Ferrari (1987: 1–34). On how Plato often connects these traditional "lovers of sights and sounds" with his new philosophic *theoros*, see Nightingale (2004: ch. 2).

himself in place of both Kleinias and Sokrates if it will, he says to Sokrates, make him more virtuous (285c). He creates trouble for the sophists (294b–d), masters their game, silences Euthydemos (299c), and much to the delight of Kleinias soundly beats Dionysodoros (300d). Ktesippos, out of a desire to impress, makes the transition from spectator to participant to short-lived champion, but he never undergoes Socratic questioning. He passes from desiring to view to desiring to *be* viewed. But he does not participate in the right part of the performance—the paradeigma of προτρεπτικὸς λόγος that Sokrates ventures to improvise (τολμήσω ἀπαυτοσχεδιάσαι, 278d). Instead, he engages with and learns to reproduce eristic patterns of thought. Sokrates improvises a different kind of discourse; Ktesippos makes a show of quickly mastering a script.[20]

In the *Gorgias*, Kallikles also begins as a lover of spectacle. He attends demonstrations (ἐπεδείξατο, 447a), and he invites Sokrates to his home to request another from Gorgias. Instead, Sokrates questions Gorgias, and Polus interrupts in defense of his teacher. Kallikles abruptly rushes into this second examination, but not in defense of a beloved. His transition from spectator to participant is brought on by an earnest if violent disagreement with the conclusions of the exchange between Polus and Sokrates. He first launches into a long speech against shame, against suffering what is unjust, and more importantly against pursuing philosophy beyond the appropriate time of life (484c; cf. 487d). He engages then in dialectic with Sokrates and responds with his commitment to an unrestrained appetite (491e). When Sokrates begins to uncover contradicitions, Kallikles claims a critical stance apart from the dialectical exchange: he explains that while he has been listening and agreeing, he has all along been thinking to himself (πάλαι τοί σου ἀκροῶμαι, ὦ Σώκρατες, καθομολογῶν, ἐνθυμούμενος ...) that Sokrates has been fastening on points the way children do (499b). When he finally disavows fully his involvement in the discussion, he argues that Sokrates could give the same performance by simply answering his own questions, which Sokrates then does, as Kallikles, effectively for the remain-

[20] Plato and Isokrates seem united in their contempt for rhetorical manuals; see *Phaedrus* 271c–272a. Isokrates argues that they cannot convey the abilities to innovate, to be original, to react to occasion, or to achieve grace (*Against the Sophists* 12–13); they cannot teach how to select, mix, arrange, and vary ἰδέαι (16), particularly to readers who lack stamina, originality, and commonsense (17). Is it any wonder that Plato and Isokrates have so much fun at the expense of those who make a very public living with lumbering sophistry?

der of the dialogue (505dff.). Kallikles participates in the performance and submits himself to scrutiny, partly, it seems, in earnest defense of his beliefs, partly in earnest objection to what he takes to be pedantry. He does not sit back and take pleasure in the spectacular dismantling of Gorgias and Polus. Nor does he participate in the way the Eleatic describes: with self-loathing, gentleness towards others, and a turn towards philosophy. He does not replicate sophistic games. Kallikles jumps into the fray with indignation and hostility because he feels compelled to defend what he takes to be common sense.

Then there is Alkibiades who takes the notion of a responsive audience to an entirely new level. He witnesses a mimetic performance but ends up participating in something that is real and personal. Upon bursting in on the symposium, he famously exclaims (215d–e; trans. Nehamas and Woodruff):

> Let anyone—man, women, or child—listen to you *or even to a poor account of what you say* [σοῦ τις ἀκούῃ ἢ τῶν σῶν λόγων ἄλλου λέγοντος, κἂν πάνυ φαῦλος ᾖ ὁ λέγων]—and we are all transported, completely possessed [ἐκπεπληγμένοι ἐσμὲν καὶ κατεχόμεθα] … the moment he starts to speak, I am beside myself: my heart starts leaping in my chest, the tears come streaming down my face, even the frenzied Corybantes seem sane compared to me—and, let me tell you, I am not alone.

The melodies of Sokrates have the power to possess (κατέχεσθαι, 215c) and throw a soul into chaos (ἐτεθορύβητό, 215e6). Political oratory has often enough moved the future statesman before, but the words of Sokrates cause him to turn against himself.[21] Alkibiades begins a double life: when he hears Sokrates, when he even hears secondhand what Sokrates said to others—that is, a record or representation of his discourse—he feels possessed and is filled with shame about *his own* choices in life.[22] When he leaves his side, he yields to the favors of the crowd.[23] The effect of just hearing an account of Sokrates speaking to others is to feel, at once, other than oneself and angry with, even disgusted by, oneself.

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[21] Cf. *Phaedrus* 266d–269a; Ferrari (1987: ch. 3).

[22] For Phaedo, on the other hand, listening to an account of Sokrates is pleasurable (ἥδιστον, 58d). Mere pleasure when listening is an inadequate response. Echekrates provides an alternative reaction: participation and thoughtful engagement.

[23] The problem may be that the performance ends. Woodruff (2008) asks us to imagine a mimetic performance that never ends: "Life would stop, if the play never dies." This is not traditional theatre. "The art of theater cues the audience that the performance is over … we must have permission again to engage with our lives" (7).

This possession and these intense feelings directed at oneself might be put in terms of what happens in theater of identification and presence. Woodruff contrasts simple mimetic theater, which consists of actors who are not the same as the characters they are playing, with theater of presence, which is any performance that "transforms people, or aims to do so" (34–35). Representations become real. Actors become their characters. Audiences can become participants. It is the "theater of sacrament" but it is also what happens, Woodruff says, when "while watching Socrates debating a sophist, you begin to answer the questions yourself, and so you become (even for a short time) a philosopher". In theater of presence, watching turns into participating. A witness of philosophical activity can become a respondent in philosophical activity. Moreover, in theater of identification (a kind of theater of presence), a watcher "merges his fantasy with the action he is watching in such a way that he—the watcher—is playing the primary role" (177). Woodruff argues that in theater of identification, "you do not care about the hero as much as you care about this new merged entity—yourself in the hero's role" (181).[24] The philosophical scrutiny and indictment of someone else can feel like a self-indictment. And perhaps this merging of entities accounts for Alkibiades' feelings of possession. Hearing Sokrates, or a reperformance of Sokrates, becomes a personal encounter with Sokrates.[25]

Woodruff warns against the limitations of this kind of theater. He argues that it calls for bad watching because identification "is limited in the scope of its emotional engagement" and therefore misses important parts of the scene (177). "Bad watchers are distracted by their own roles … they are incapable of empathy" (185). In the case of Platonic dialogue, becoming the respondent in someone else's Socratic encounter and answering with your own beliefs on that occasion, thinking of yourself while witnessing someone else answer, means cultivating an alternative to empathetic understanding. The correction of someone else should not always inspire pity or pleasure or sympathetic feelings of confusion; it

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Some theater of presence (not mimetic) aims at such an indelible transformation that the performance never ends. The performance becomes real. Alkibiades fails to sustain the performance when he is apart from Sokrates.

[24] Cf. Boal (1974).

[25] Aristippos, on hearing from the Socratic Isomachos "some small seeds and bites of Sokrates' *logoi*, was seized with emotion, so that his body collapsed and became completely pale and thin, until he sailed to Athens and, thirsty and sunburnt, he drank from the source and researched the man, his arguments, and his philosophy, whose goal it was to recognize one's own ills and leave them behind" (Plutarch, *Mor.*516c11).

should inspire you to stop watching and to start responding. The central rule of the *elenchus*, after all, is that the investigation be about the respondent's own personal beliefs. Alkibiades does not empathize with the emotions of someone being examined by Sokrates. Cross-examination and representations of cross-examination haunt people and make them emotional and full of self-loathing because they provoke a substitution within the dialogue—myself in place of the respondent—and an adaptation of its course—my very own *aporia*. Perhaps when an audience responds in this way, it misses important parts of the scene—for example, the ways in which a certain type of person responds to inquiry, or the ways in which Sokrates or another narrator *portrays* certain types of people responding—and perhaps this is why it is important sometimes to study and interpret dialogues rather than participate in them. But spectators of representations of Socratic inquiry may feel compelled to make the representations about themselves, and this seems an important part of the experience of representations of Socratic discourse.

II. *Participatory Presence: Metalepsis in* Phaedo *and* Euthydemus

Now we will turn to *Phaedo* and also look again at *Euthydemus* in an effort to distinguish how the audience can be made to participate in retellings and mimetic representations of philosophical narrative. This sort of participation models the most open view of textuality yet. I will first briefly introduce a few narratological tools which will help us to identify what I take to be in many ways the most significant and underappreciated episodes in the Platonic canon.

Gérard Genette (1980) describes two worlds being at play in most narrative acts: "the world in which one tells, [and] the world of which one tells" or the extradiegetic and intradiegetic worlds respectively. With these terms, Genette describes a literary device whereby a narrative is embedded in another narrative. If I tell a story, the events that I relate (that is, the world of which I tell) constitute the primary, 'basic' level of narrative, which Genette calls the 'intradiegetic' level. The immediate narrating situation, that is, the context that includes both myself as teller and my audience, is what Genette calls the 'extradiegetic' level (that is, the world in which I tell). Genette further describes (and this is what is most important) narrative transgressions (metalepses) whereby

characters from one level intrude into another for an unsettling effect. While Genette has in mind experiments in postmodern literature, I will argue that intrusions of this sort occur in Platonic dialogue for crucial effects.

Before we examine metalepsis in Platonic dialogue, we should note how frequently this narrative intrusion occurs elsewhere in ancient literature with different forms and effects. The recent work of de Jong (2009) provides examples and a typology of metalepsis in ancient Greek literature.[26] These include (1) apostrophe by which the narrator enters the narrated world at vital and emotional points (for example, *Il.*16.692–693), (2) characters announcing the text in the text when they anticipate their memorialization and thereby enter the world of narration (for example, *Il.*6.357–358), (3) the blending of narrative voices as when a narrator reporting speech shifts from a dependent construction to an independent (for example, *Od.*8.266–270), (4) the merging of extradiegetic and intradiegetic worlds at the end of narratives (Bacchylides 17.128–132), and (5) varia including the narrator revealing himself as the creator rather than the reporter of the story (*Il.*22.326–329), and the narrator physically entering the scene of earlier reported events (Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 8.1). De Jong further notes that these ancient examples differ from modern examples in that they are "for the most part serious (rather than comic) and are aimed at increasing the authority of the narrator and the realism of his narrative (rather than breaking the illusion)" (115).[27] The metaleptic intrusions which we will be examining in Platonic dialogues may resemble some of these examples (for example, the blending of narrative voices, narrator as creator). But some are triggered by the imagination and unanticipated reaction of an audience rather than the aims and skills of a narrator. In such cases, the narrative may seem so vivid, so real, so personal, that the audience wants to participate in it. And still other metaleptic intrusions may be triggered by the narrator but may be designed in order to break the illusion and to abandon the narrative altogether.

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[26] I am grateful to Jonathan Ready for the citation and a discussion of archaic examples. De Jong notes that Genette (2004) includes a discussion of the shield of Achilles among his postmodern examples.

[27] Metaleptic intrusions that secure the authority of the narrator and the veracity of the narrative might be expected to bring about a more fixed text. But in an agonistic performance context, these intrusions could also mark moments of great virtuosity and creativity.

Phaedo begins with Echekrates asking Phaedo to narrate as fully as possible the words and deeds of Sokrates just prior to his execution. Before Phaedo begins his long μίμησις with a bit of διήγησις, he describes the confusion and agitation which everyone who was present shared.[28] Then his narrative begins. If this dialogue were like most of the others in the Platonic canon, that would be the last we would hear from Echekrates; the rest of the dialogue would occur at the intradiegetic level albeit with the narrator's usual evaluative and referential intrusions which provide orientation and, sometimes, the narrative point. However, Echekrates interrupts the narrative not once, but twice, and in a remarkable way. An interruption due to an extradiegetic character commenting on intradiegetic events would be unusual enough in Platonic narrative, but Echekrates does more than this. Phaedo describes how Kebês argued against the immortality of the soul and drove everyone to great confusion (ἀναταράξαι), doubt (εἰς ἀπιστίαν), and to feel—as everyone who was there told each other afterwards (ὡς ὕστερον ἐλέγομεν πρὸς ἀλλήλους)—depressed, nauseated (ἀηδῶς διετέθημεν, 88c). Everyone there went from feeling sorrow as the execution drew near, to feeling relief upon hearing that the soul does not die, to feeling confusion and sickness from not knowing what to believe.

It is at this moment that Echekrates interrupts the dialogue as though he himself were present (88cd–e): "By the gods, Phaedo, I share the same feeling with all of you (συγγνώμην γε ἔχω ὑμῖν), for as I listen to you now I find myself saying to myself [λέγειν πρὸς ἐμαυτὸν ἐπέρχεται]: 'What argument *shall we* trust [τίνι οὖν ἔτι πιστεύσομεν λόγῳ]?' " Rowe (1998) has argued that Echekrates here "speaks as if he were himself present at the conversation, so demonstrating his full involvement in it: for him, as of course for us, as readers, the arguments are of more than historical concern" (211). I doubt that our involvement as readers is always as certain as Rowe suggests, but we can say that Echekrates has been "present" for the narrated events.

He does more than share in the appropriate feeling of confusion. Echekrates goes on to explain that the argument for the immortality of the soul *has* a remarkable effect on him "now and always" (νῦν καὶ ἀεί), and the retelling of these events has reminded him (ὑπέμνησέν με

[28] Again, μίμησις with a bit of διήγησις rather than the suggested opposite. This is excusable because (1) there are no undignified characters in attendance, and (2) simple narrative could not engage Echekrates in the ways he gets involved.

ῥηθείς) that the argument had previously seemed (προυδέδοκτο) right to him too. Echekrates thus reflects on his past philosophical commitments, and finds now that he is at a loss (πάνυ δέομαι). He does not sit back and marvel at the spectacle as it unfolds. He is invested in the retelling every step of the way, and feels compelled to give voice both to emotions which everyone who was truly present could give voice to only afterwards and to personal beliefs. Locating himself inside the narrated events, saying what everyone there was feeling but could not say, and reflecting out loud on his own commitments and struggles, Echekrates creates the impression that he has been even more present than those who were there.[29] Echeckrates does more than experience the same emotions as were aroused in the companions who were actually there.[30] He interrupts, gives voice to questions that he has been asking himself, reflects on past commitments, and anticipates how Sokrates responds in speech and manner.

A second time, Echekrates interrupts Phaedo's retelling. Sokrates has just argued for a particular hypothetical method which would prevent Kebês and the others from jumbling hypotheses and consequences like the antilogicians, when Echekrates suddenly interrupts and exclaims that it seems to him that Sokrates is making things exceptionally clear. Phaedo responds that all those present thought so too, in the past tense (ἔδοξεν). Echekrates has just explained how he finds clarity in the argument, but he answers, "So do we who were not present but hear of it now" (καὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῖς ἀποῦσι, νῦν δὲ ἀκούουσιν, 102a). Echekrates feels compelled to justify his reaction: the words of an intradiegetic character seem clear to those of us who were not there but are (in some sense) there now. When he interrupts, Echekrates is speaking as though he were there, but Phaedo effectively excludes him from the cast of those who were present. Echekrates' response seems to me a defense for a particular

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[29] Phaedo continues to explain to Echekrates that when everyone was feeling confused and depressed, Sokrates remained happy and responded in a pleasant, kind, and admiring manner (89a). Sokrates then rallies everyone there: "he healed our distress and, as it were, recalled us from our flight and defeat and turned us around [προύτρεψεν] to join him in the examination of their argument." Echekrates then asks Phaedo how Sokrates did all of this not because he is merely a lover of spectacle. He insists that Phaedo recount these events with the greatest precision (δίελθε ὡς δύνασαι ἀκριβέστατα, 88e); narrative precision allows Echekrates to be more present, to interpolate more of the emotions and thoughts in the prison cell. The account has greater fidelity because of his interruptions and interpolations.

[30] Blank (1993: 437).

kind of presence at philosophical retellings. Again, he is invested in what happens, and feels what those who were there felt, but he is also no mere spectator. He is involved in the narrative. And he makes room for a certain kind of access to narrated events, perhaps even greater access than was possible at the events themselves, because, in this metalepsis, he has the room to react in his own way, out loud and from his own emotions, past and present beliefs, and his own grasp of the hero's character. Plato does not simply narrate the events of Sokrates' final day. He narrates one narrating to another who wants to "be there" and reflect on being there; the extradiegetic frame and interruptions show people engaging (Echekrates) and reengaging (Phaedo) in thoughtful ways with the words and deeds of an exceptional man.

The foil to Echekrates is found in *Euthydemus*. Sokrates reports to his friend Krito an earlier event in which he publicly competed with a couple of eristic sophists for potential "students". In this extradiegetic frame, Krito, who is at once a sucker for sophistic spectacle and a concerned father looking for an instructor for his sons, asks Sokrates to relate the details of this public contest which, on the previous day, he saw from a distance but could not hear because of the number of other spectators.[31] Sokrates agrees to narrate the contest in which he and the sophists took turns trying to exhort a young man, Kleinias, to their respective intellectual methods and objectives. In the reported narrative, while the sophists humiliate Kleinias and stun him into silence, Sokrates is described (by Sokrates) as making some real progress with the boy. Kleinias had previously responded to Sokrates with short answers, but he suddenly becomes very eloquent. At this key point, an incredulous Krito interrupts the narrative with the claim that the boy is speaking rather like someone who has no need of an education (290e; trans. Sprague):

> KRITO: What do you mean, Sokrates? Did that boy utter all this? SOKRATES: You're not convinced of it, Krito? KRITO: Good heavens no! Because, in my opinion, if he spoke like that, he has no need of education from Euthydemos or anyone else. SOKRATES: Dear me, then perhaps after all it was Ktesippos who said this, and I am getting absent-minded. KRITO: Not my idea of Ktesippos! SOKRATES: But I'm sure of one thing at least, that it was neither Euthydemos nor Dionysodoros who said it. Do you

[31] Both Ktesippos and Krito are φιλήκοος and avid watchers, and both fail to participate in Sokrates' protreptic discourse. As a study of failed transformations of lovers of spectacle into lovers of the sights of the metaphysical realm, *Euthydemus* is a grotesque companion to *Republic*; cf. Nightingale (2004).

> suppose, my good Krito, that some superior being was there and uttered these things—because I am positive I heard them. KRITO: Yes, by heaven, Sokrates, I certainly think it was some superior being, very much so. But after this did you still go on looking for the art? And did you find the one you were looking for or not?

As Krito clearly implies, the narrating Sokrates has willfully misattributed mature and thoughtful remarks to a young and overwhelmingly reticent character.[32] I suggest that, in his narration of the events, Sokrates puts these philosophical claims into Kleinias' mouth in order to provoke an intellectual and emotional response from Krito in the extradiegetic level. In short, Sokrates tries to force Krito to move from the passive act of listening to stories (and certainly not the sort of stories Sokrates is keen to tell—these are, after all, mostly μίμησις of exceedingly undignified characters) to the more active and collaborative pursuit of wisdom.[33] Sokrates has the narrative skill to bait the listener of a reported dialogue into doing the more significant work of entering into a dialogue of his own. It is

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[32] Chance (1992) argues that Krito's disbelief rests on his inability to "recognize that he has just witnessed Kleinias bridge the gap between learning and knowing by 'coming to know' through a cooperative process in which Socrates induced the lad to hunt down and to capture realities that are not part of his everyday conscious awareness and that will lose their tether to conscious moorings and submerge once again into forgetfulness, unless he receives continued support from a skilled questioner over a long period of time. In short, not recognizing that Socrates can trigger the recollection process best of men and most quickly, Crito has failed to see that Kleinias is, in part, responsible for his answers, but that his progress is only temporary" (123–124). Similarly, "Socrates will orchestrate other conversational techniques, the cumulative effect of which will be to stimulate Kleinias' philosophical awareness to such a degree that he will confidently seize the reins of the discourse on his own" (60). Cf. Hawtrey (1981) who argues with the help of R.K. Sprague that Plato is making a joke by placing "such comparatively advanced doctrine into the mouth of a novice" and thereby "emphasizing the dialectic/eristic contrast—if they want speed, here it is" (129–130). A more obvious and more important point remains that Sokrates has the resources to bait the listener of a reported dialogue into doing the more significant work of entering into a dialogue of his own. These scholars are also wed to a developmental notion of the Platonic canon which makes *Euthydemus* a stepping stone to more crucial, advanced doctrine, e.g., "the recollection process". McCabe (2008a) argues that the exchange "invites us to wonder who is who, and of what sort". The argument from Kleinias' mouth should not be taken to be Socrates' because it "fits ill with Socrates' own conclusions at 281" (114). For McCabe, the exchange is a literary device that focuses attention primarily on the Protean qualities of characters, and secondarily on the fictionality of the narrative (113 n. 16). McCabe (2008b) argues that the interruption leads to greater detachment and contemplation rather than identification and sympathy (106).

[33] *Republic* III on proper narration. Krito asked for a narration (μοι διήγησαι), and this is what Sokrates delivers (σοι πειράσομαι ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἅπαντα διηγήσασθαι, 272d).

more important for one to be engaged in the pursuit of wisdom than to hear passively stories about others doing it. Sokrates is not interested in putting on such a vivid and dramatic spectacle merely for Krito's entertainment. He wants this lover of spectacle to become a lover of wisdom.

Krito takes the bait and, in the middle of Sokrates' narrative, Sokrates attempts to engineer a striking metaleptic intrusion: the extradiegetic Krito should stand in for the intradiegetic Kleinias at precisely where the reported dialogue left off. Krito does participate, but only until the discussion begins to unravel in *aporia*, at which point he disavows his role in the search for wisdom and instead asks for the story to continue without him. When we look at this metaleptic episode closely, we notice how strangely Sokrates is suddenly behaving. Throughout the entire narrative of the previous day's events, with very brief exceptions, Sokrates delivers his report in direct speech marked with *verba dicendi* to indicate speakers, and marked thus rarely in the first position; in other words, most of his narration is delivered in character.[34] The exceptions consist of introductory and distributed comments for orientation and narratorial evaluation.[35] But at this metaleptic intrusion, Sokrates switches to direct questions and indirect speech, and drops the exceptionally frequent *verba dicendi* (except for an unusual ἡμεῖς ἔφαμεν πρὸς ἀλλήλους [291e1–2]; see below). This way of speaking is inconsistent not only with the rest of his narrative, but also with Sokrates' rules for sound narrative in *Republic*

[34] I say "in character" with a view that between purely diegetic, reported speech (what Sokrates calls ἁπλῇ διήγησις, *Rep.*394b) and theatrical mimesis lie degrees of mimetic report even at the syntactic level: indications of speaker in the second position or postposition make the delivery of a report more mimetic. For a study of *oratio recta* and *verba dicendi* in *Republic*, see Richmond (2002) which presents a full count of *verba dicendi* not only in *Republic*, but also in all the other dialogues "narrated by a speaker using direct speech who took part in the dialogue himself" (500). I have divided Richmond's total number of such indications in each of these dialogues by the number of their Stephanus pages to give the following numbers of *verba dicendi* per page: *Parmenides* (0.6), *Symposium* (2.1), *Protagoras* (4.2), *Republic* (7.0), *Amatores* (7.3), *Lysis* (7.9), *Charmides* (8.2), *Euthydemus* (10.6). The highest concentration of speaker indications in Sokrates' largely mimetic report to Krito gives way to very few but destabilizing indications in the metaleptic interruption at 290e–294a. The sudden lack of indications makes the subtle shift from indirect speech within the interruption to direct speech/questions unsettling.

[35] See Labov (1972: ch. 9) for a discussion of the elements of an effective narrative. Orientation elements provide the who, what, when, and where of a story, while evaluative elements indicate why the story is worth reporting. Evaluative elements can be distributed throughout (369), and may often "tell what people did rather than what they said" (373).

(Book 3). After all, he has chosen to *represent with indirect speech* both argumentation which is sound and earnest interlocutors who are making progress, while he previously *imitated* shameful argumentation and characters.

The narrating Sokrates manages gradually if only briefly to merge the intradiegetic and extradiegetic worlds through these subtle changes in his report, presumably to make the transition from spectator to participant less jarring for a lover of sounds and sights who persistently asks for the narrative to continue. Although Sokrates has signaled his role as a creator rather than a reporter of the narrative, Krito is greedy for more spectacle: "But after this did you still go on looking [ἐζητήσατε] for the art? And did you find [ηὕρετε] the one you were looking for [ἐζητεῖτε] or not?" (291a). Sokrates explains that he and the other participants were laughable, like children chasing birds, like people lost in a labyrinth, back at the beginning of the search and just as much in want as when they started (291b–c). The story has come full circle: "So why should I recount the whole story?" he asks. But Krito hounds him, "How did this happen to you all [ὑμῖν συνέβη]?" Sokrates then shifts into indirect discourse for an abridgment of events and arguments which also cease to belong to any one intradiegetic character in particular.[36] And he dresses up a collectively owned conclusion with a reference to tragedy—κατὰ τὸ Αἰσχύλου ἰαμβεῖον (d1)—for Krito's sake.[37] Krito takes the bait again, and interrupts with an expectation that something seems right in what this narrator has said.[38] Sokrates then calls on Krito to answer his own question (291d5–e2):

> You shall judge [σὺ κρινεῖς], Krito, if you wish to hear what happened to us next. We took up the question once again in somewhat this fashion [αὖθις γὰρ δὴ πάλιν ἐσκοποῦμεν ὧδέ πως]: Come now [φέρε], does the kingly art, which rules everything, produce some result for us, or not? Certainly

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[36] E.g., ἔδοξε γὰρ δὴ ἡμῖν (291c4), ἐσκοποῦμεν (d6).

[37] Poetry is referenced only one other time in the dialogue (Pindar *Ol.*1, 304b4) and also in the extradiegetic frame. The intradiegetic Sokrates frequently makes reference to myths, but poetic reference is reserved for the extradiegetic lover of spectacle. In fact, the whole careful arrangement of the contest into a dramatic spectacle complete with choruses, chorus leaders, actors, and spectators is executed by the extradiegetic Sokrates only for the sake of Krito; the intradiegetic characters are not aware that they are being marshaled in this way and have dramatic roles to play. See Nightingale (1995) on the appropriation of traditional cultural voices.

[38] The subject of "οὐκοῦν καλῶς ὑμῖν ἐδόκει, ὦ Σώκρατες;" (d4) is unclear—the verse of Aeschylus, the priority of ἡ βασιλικὴ τέχνη?—but the question expects an affirmative answer. Sokrates may be further baiting Krito into a substitution.

> it does, we said to one another [ἡμεῖς ἔφαμεν πρὸς ἀλλήλους]. Wouldn't you say so too, Krito?

Who said what in the intradiegetic world is no longer important, and yet there was ostensibly a dialogue somewhat along the reported lines (ὧδέ πως), dialogue which we would expect, as ever at Sokrates' insistence, to have adhered to the "say what you believe" rule. And this is precisely what Sokrates demands. The division between the intradiegetic and extradiegetic worlds becomes unstable. Sokrates wants Krito to weigh in on what is being discussed within the story as it is being discussed. He wants Krito to say what *he* believes. Extradiegetic commitments become entangled with intradiegetic dialogue. Sokrates asks Krito to imagine himself in the position of having to answer: ὥσπερ εἰ σὲ ἐγὼ ἐρωτῴην … (291e4–5). Direct questions are briefly followed up with leading questions that anticipate affirmation, until they give way to direct questions that no longer offer any guidance.[39]

These direct questions mark a turning point at which Sokrates tries to get Krito to abandon intradiegetic events altogether. Their discussion has followed turns in the intradiegetic discussion, but Krito and Sokrates could potentially go off book, so to speak, and begin a new improvisation of προτρεπτικὸς λόγος (cf. 278d). Sokrates needs to ease Krito into standing on his own. Perhaps sensing hesitation in Krito, or at least knowing too well that Krito will hang on stubbornly to the spectacle, Sokrates follows direct questions with some encouragement and hints that he and his extradiegetic partner are beginning to engage in a new activity (292a4–b2):

> SOKRATES: Now what about the kingly art, when it rules over all the things in its control—what does it produce? Perhaps you are not quite ready with an answer [ἴσως οὐ πάνυ γ' εὐπορεῖς]. KRITO: Certainly not, Sokrates. SOKRATES: Nor were we [οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμεῖς], Krito. But you are aware [οἶσθα] of this point at least, that if this is to be the art we are looking for [ἣν ἡμεῖς ζητοῦμεν], it must be something useful. KRITO: Yes indeed. SOKRATES: And it certainly must provide us with something good? KRITO: Necessarily, Sokrates. SOKRATES: And Kleinias and I of course agreed that nothing is good except some sort of knowledge. KRITO: Yes, you said that [οὕτως ἔλεγες].

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[39] The direct questions are not accompanied by *verba dicendi*. This way of speaking could be read as a relative of de Jong's third type of metalepsis: the blending of narrative voices as when a narrator reporting speech shifts from a dependent to an independent construction. From one perspective, Sokrates is speaking as both an intradiegetic character and an extradiegetic interlocutor.

Sokrates is reinforcing his suggestion from moments before that Krito become more discerning (σὺ κρινεῖς). He appeals to Krito's own personal beliefs (οἶσθα) on the effects of the kingly art, and he makes Krito directly responsible for the intradiegetic inquiry (ἡμεῖς ζητοῦμεν) that is beginning to come off the rails. Moreover, he calls on Krito to step out of the narrative flow by facilitating recall of a point of argumentation, and not just any point, but the very point that links Sokrates' first and second attempts at προτρεπτικὸς λόγος. The goodness of knowledge concludes the first inquiry with Kleinias (281a–282d), and begins the second (288dff.) when Sokrates asks his intradiegetic interlocutor to remind him of where they left off (ἀνάμνησόν με). The acquisition of such knowledge is, of course, philosophy (288d8), and it is to this point, now something of an intradiegetic refrain, that Sokrates wants to lead his extradiegetic interlocutor. If there is one argument from the narrated spectacle that Krito should be able to recall, it is this one. Krito remembers this and subsequent intradiegetic agreements, but not as his own: "So you agreed on this for the moment at any rate, according to your account" (τότε γοῦν οὕτως ὑμῖν ὡμολογήθη, ὡς σὺ τοὺς λόγους ἀπήγγειλας, 292c2–3). Sokrates makes one last push to abandon the narrative with a series of direct questions and a call for extradiegetic responsibility (292d4–e5). But Krito continues to hear only intradiegetic voices; the questions are merely reported questions that lead to intradiegetic confusion.[40]

When this extradiegetic investigation of the usefulness of philosophy breaks down, Krito attributes the confusion to the characters in the intradiegetic world rather than to himself: "you seem to have gotten yourselves into a frightful tangle" (εἰς πολλήν γε ἀπορίαν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἀφίκεσθε, 292e). At this point, Sokrates resumes his narration of the contest in his continuing effort *as a mimetic narrator* to turn Krito to the love of wisdom. While Echekrates in *Phaedo* confirms the appropriate feelings of philosophical investigation, shares in those feelings, and reflects on

[40] We should note that Krito believes, like his Isokratean acquaintance and perhaps only under his influence, that learning eristic maneuvers at his age would be shameful (272c, 304c), as would wishing to engage in discussion with such people *in public* (ἐθέλειν διαλέγεσθαι τοιούτοις ἐναντίον πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων, 305b2–3, cf. *Gorgias* 485d, 499b). He would mind less being refuted than refuting with their arguments, and he maintains that he does like to listen (φιλήκοος, 304c6). He has the good sense to remain an observer of, or at most a respondent to, eristic acrobatics. But Sokrates is not baiting and coaxing him into participating in eristics. Perhaps Krito refuses to engage with Sokrates because of his suspicions or an inability to differentiate one sort of inquiry from another.

his past philosophical experience, Krito drops out, disavows any sympathy, and betrays his love of spectacle rather than a prior commitment to philosophical activity. The metaleptic intrusion aims at fostering a kind of "presence" which makes the continuation and completion of the narrative irrelevant, or at the very least of secondary importance. Sokrates executes a series of narrative operations that are designed to coax an extradiegetic character into interrupting, participating in, and ultimately turning away from the spectacular representation of sophistic competition and philosophical investigation. In other words, elements of the representation of the intradiegetic προτρεπτικὸς λόγος should bring about a turning away from a mimetic reperformance and a turning towards an impromptu extradiegetic inquiry. If the investigation had continued in the extradiegetic level, the intradiegetic world would have been abandoned. The events that Krito was so keen to see performed and hear reperformed would have served as a springboard for new and impromptu philosophical dialogue.[41] But Krito is never "present" in that way, even when Sokrates grossly violates his own guidelines for sound narrative in his ongoing effort to convert this lover of spectacle into a philosopher.[42] The metaleptic intrusion between narrative levels suggests the possibility, and even, I think, the necessity (philosophically speaking), of departures from a text once general themes and lines of inquiry have been established.

III. *Isokrates on Revision and Supplementation*

We can now consider some comparanda from Isokrates which I think add to this growing sense of a more open view of textuality. So far, we have seen how interruptions by spectators of both Socratic discourse

[41] This activity of "rewriting" the performance is expected and prompted for the purpose of self-improvement; revision extends centrifugally from representation of past discourse to novel discourse, from text to unscripted performance. Centripetal revision involves readers and interpreters getting the text correct; e.g., the Magnesian law code, in some instances, may require touching up, and successive efforts at conservation and improvement, like a painting (769a–e; cf. 727a–d, 797a–d). Saunders (1995) argues that the legal structure which Plato "sketches" is "shifting ... [the structure] is, like all political structures, capable of improvement; it embodies aspirations" (603). On the conservative nature of this process of revision, see Bobonich (2002: 395–408).

[42] Another matter: Krito is present for the Isokratean's critique, which he retells in an intradiegetic foray of his own. But this presence once again misses the main point. Sokrates is not interested in witnessing and gossiping about philosophical activity; he is interested in participating in it.

and representations of Socratic discourse might model an approach of adaptation and supplementation of Platonic texts in performance. Representations of philosophical activity serve as prompts for unscripted philosophical interruptions and departures. Isokrates is far more explicit about the ways in which texts might be modified and serve as departures for philosophical activity and discourse.[43]

First, there is the long process of ongoing and collaborative composition, performance, revision, and supplementation that he details in the *Panathenaicus*. Isokrates submits his speech in writing to collaborative revision (ἐπηνώρθουν, 200) with his students, who find that it merely needs an ending; the frame to the speech explains this. It then describes how the speech is submitted to further scrutiny by a former student, who objects to its anti-Spartan views. Those objections provoke Isokrates to continue the speech on the spot with a view to correct his pupil. When his performance compels the audience to deal contemptuously with the pro-Spartan, he believes they and he himself are in need of correction for their contempt and lack of moderation (229–230).[44] He steals away, dictates the performance (ὑπέβαλον), reads and examines it thoroughly days later (ἀναγιγνώσκων αὐτὰ καὶ διεξιών), and finds that it is indeed immoderate. He feels compelled to burn the whole thing, but is torn when he thinks of how much time he spent on the composition (231–232). Vexed, he gathers his students for a reading, after which the pro-Spartan delivers an unsolicited and impromptu performance: this supplement includes a reassessment of his former critique; a correction to Isokrates' impromptu performance (and reperformance); some literary criticism;[45] and his advice that the speech be not burned but revised and supplemented (διορθώσαντα καὶ προσγράψαντα, 262). Aferwards, the other students, adds the frame, congratulated and envied the former student. His speech and the teacher's speech (as immoderate as it was) are both added. Also added is the frame which both explains the motivations

43 See Morgan (2003) for a comparison of some Platonic and Isokratean strategies of involving and directing an audience. She argues, "Whereas Isocrates constantly meditates on his relationship with his audience, Plato is silent and refuses to engage in formal oration. Isocrates struggles to control reception; Plato *seems* not to try" (191, my italics). We might also say that Isokrates at times only *seems* to struggle with reception and the literary tools of polyphony which are so characteristic of Platonic artistry.

44 His pupils, in fact, are crooked in their understanding (οὐκ ὀρθῶς γιγνώσκοντες, 229); that is, they are in need of correction (ἐπανορθοῦν).

45 He praises his teacher for his use of *amphiboloi logoi* (240).

for the first speech—a defense of Isokrates' views on education and poetry (19–25)—and records this process of performance, revision, and supplementation.

This temporalized account of various moments of performance and reperformance, revision, and supplementation sounds so messy, whereas the final narrative which ingests these moments seems on first reading so linear and straightforward. But this is part of the text's artfulness. The *Panathenaicus* presents a relatively open model of textuality: the story goes that readings of texts prompt performances which are incorporated through revision and supplementation into subsequent versions.[46] What is more is that the correction of texts is prompted by a desire to correct character: in an effort to improve both his students and himself, Isokrates dramatizes how he made room for the collaborative production of Isokratean discourse. Isokrates continues to give readings of his work, to provoke responses, to vex and be vexed until both he and his star-pupil have been corrected and elicit the exact same response of envy and congratulations (ζηλῶ σε καὶ μακαρίζω, 260; cf. 264). The frame narrative demonstrates and offers a defense of Isokrates' pedagogical methods and aims: critical engagement with and collaborative revision of speech results in the revision of character (διορθοῦν/ἐπανορθοῦν). Spectators are compelled to participate according to their own beliefs and talents; those beliefs and talents are inscribed into the narrative. Those beliefs are corrected by their teacher, by the tastes of their colleagues, and by themselves, and the process of them speaking and correcting speech is inscribed into Isokratean discourse. We might even call elements of this process 'theater of presence' in so far as the former student *imitates* his teacher's discourse and *becomes* Isokratean—a process we will examine more closely below. Of course, the frame narrative finally authorizes a fully revised and complete text, but it is a text full of ambiguities that reward an audience, says the student, only through examination (ἀκριβῶς διεξιοῦσιν) and hard work (πονοῦντας, 246–247, cf. 271). And acts of thorough examination (διεξιών) lead, as we see in the narrative frame, to the reported process of textual and philosophical revision (231).

[46] See Gurd (2007) for a related account of "textual collectivization"—the circulation of trial texts to invite and incorporate revision and to negotiate a literary republic—in the works of Cicero. Cf. Habinek (2009) for a "range of ways in which surviving texts ask or allow themselves to be supplemented, corrected, de- or re-composed by readers, listeners, and writers" (13).

Nowhere is this view of text as prompt for performance and textual supplementation made more explicit in the fourth century than in Isokrates' letters to young tyrants.[47] These texts also aim at the revision of character (ἐπανορθοῦν, *ad D.*3, 4; cf. *Evag.*7), and the revision of character is achieved through supplementary performance and composition. Isokrates explains in numerous ways that it works like this: the letter is a storehouse (ταμιεῖον) of parainetic advice for the prince's present life and for the years to come (*ad D.*44), advice based on the character of the father (τοῦ πατρὸς προαιρέσεις, 9). When one listens to the text (and one should want to listen to it often, to be fond of hearing such injunctions [φιλήκοος, *ad D.*19]), one should select from it (*ad D.*44), and make use of those selections or seek better (*ad N.*38), like a bee settling on every flower (*ad D.*52). A listener may make use of these injunctions in three ways: (1) studying or theorizing them (φιλοσοφεῖν, here contrasted with ἐμπειρία), (2) training oneself in their application (ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων γυμνάζεσθαι) which might best be described, I think, as improvisatory exercise or gymnastics, and (3) imitating the actions of others who have executed these precepts well (*ad N.*35–38).[48] A single injunction of the dozens provided by the text may be an occasion for any one of these activities. And Isokrates gets even more explicit about how any one of these uses might work: practice speaking these precepts or speaking about these precepts (μελέτα … λέγειν) "in order that your thoughts may through habit come to be like your words" (συνεθισθῇς ὅμοια τοῖς εἰρημένοις φρονεῖν, 38). Habituation through study, improvisatory exercise, or imitation leads to right thoughts and right actions. A reader of Isokratean discourse becomes a hybridized character in thought and deed, like Woodruff's merged entity in theater of identification.[49] The idea, once again, is to think of yourself when you reflect on and imitate the words and actions of great men.

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[47] For a study of how "private citizens and dynasts", as Isokrates puts it, can both be participatory readers, see Morgan (2003: 181–213).

[48] I take the difference between improvisatory gymnastics and imitation to be that improvisation (1) does not require that an actor make-believe he is someone else, and (2) does not have real-world consequences except for the impression that it leaves on the improviser (on his neural pathways, his confidence, his muscle-memory). Cf. Johnstone (1979). Imitation, in this case, strangely has real-world consequences. The prince (or whoever the listener may be) executes real actions as the king or some other *particular* reputable and enviable person would have.

[49] Cf. *Evag.*7: ἐθιστέον ἀκούειν … ἐπανορθοῦντας ….

And here there is one more step that is the greatest departure and supplementation yet: do not merely imitate your father, but vie with him. Isokrates explains, "You must consider that no athlete is so in duty bound to train against his competitors as you are to consider how you are to vie with [to be an ἐφάμιλλος to] your father in his ways of life" (τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς ἐπιτηδεύμασιν, *ad D.*12). Don't be like your father; be better than him. Vie with those who are eulogized (cf. *Evag.*77). Don't just make use of these precepts; be the sort of person to inspire future encomia. Inspire others to compose as memorials "images [εἰκόνας] of your character ... an imperishable memorial [μνήμην] of your soul" (*ad N.*36–37).[50] In other words, the right sort of listener should, through imitation, improvisation, and competition, provide the material for future compositions. Isokrates has composed a text that explicitly invites selection, imitation and improvisation (a kind of supplementary performance), and supplementary composition.

Alexander Nehamas (1998) argues that, after we read a text like *Euthyphro*,

> we close the book, in a gesture that is an exact replica of Euthyphro's sudden remembering of the appointment that ends his conversation with Socrates. We too go about our usual business, just as he proposes to do. And our usual business does not normally center on becoming conscious of and fighting against the self-delusion that characterizes Euthyphro and that, as we turn away from the dialogue, we demonstrate to be ruling our own lives as well.[51]

How do we respond to the *Euthyphro*?[52] What would we have said there in the agora, and what would we say had we been in his place, which is another way of asking, how would we have responded to the dismantling of our own beliefs. We might study the dialogue in order to see where Euthyphro goes wrong, how the argumentation of cross-examination works, what constitutes Platonic style, and so on. And that is a good thing to do. But many early philosophical texts model or explicitly prescribe

[50] Cf. Ford (2002: 239–240).

[51] Nehamas (1998: 41).

[52] It would be a difficult exercise to read the dialogue and empathize with Euthyphro if the path to empathy meant imagining yourself in Euthyphro's place. Perhaps if you imagined yourself as Euthyphro in Euthyphro's place and made Euthyphro-like decisions there (what Gordon [1995] calls 'simulation'; more below), you might be in a better position to pass judgment on his decisions and your own self-delusions. Nehamas does not call for empathy; he suggests only that both acts of turning away resemble one another.

another response of interruption, participation, and adaptation. To be a good watcher of this kind of performance is to stop watching and to get involved. To be a good reader may be to become a respondent, to get emotional and enter into the fray; to read aloud with friends, but at that point in which everyone is invested and moved to recall personal commitments, to interrupt the reading, to depart from the text and improvise new investigations together. To be a good listener may be to take a rule for living, practice speaking it and thinking it and being like someone who believes it until you are not that someone, but better than that someone, and inspire new compositions for new generations of readers, new performances from readers on how to live one's life well.

Whether these texts are read, heard being read, performed in character, or heard and seen being performed, they provide models for departure and supplementation, although, in each of these engagements with the text, 'departure' can mean different things. If you are performing a Platonic dialogue, and you become the extradiegetic Sokrates who becomes the intradiegetic Sokrates who intentionally misattributes speech in order to provoke his extradiegetic audience, perhaps your performance would not be complete without baiting your lover of spectacle (that is, your scene partner) more than once; that is, your performance would not be complete without departing at least once from the script. That may seem a frivolous experiment for me to design, but surely it would not be frivolous to think about the effects of performing the dialogue as it has been written. Ruby Blondell (2002) argues that the primary effect of the text, whether studied or performed, must have been on the reader and of a certain sort: "Just as smoking on stage in a play, night after night, may cause lung-cancer, and dancing on stage, night after night, may improve one's physical health, so *repeating* philosophical dialogues may make us more philosophical. The dialogues themselves would then become philosophy, in a way that drama rarely, if ever, becomes what it represents."[53] In the absence of an audience, the reader repeats and rehearses lines composed by another, and becomes what he or she imitates.

We can think about this conditioning and transformation more carefully in terms of acts of textual supplementation. Robert Gordon (1995) explains that in simulation acting an actor does more than imagine being

[53] Blondell (2002: 27). Blondell also finds plausible both the occasional performance of the dialogues and their availability in the Academy to be read and studied as texts (25).

in someone else's situation; an actor imagines being someone else in that someone's situation. An actor makes decisions as that someone with the qualification that those decisions are, or at least should be, made "off-line"; that is, they "must be decoupled from the mechanisms that ordinarily translate decision making and intention formation into action".[54] However, we might sometimes expect a "quite distinctive and weird sort of error … our transformational representations of other people will have a tendency to go on-line". When this happens, we might say that in a certain sense the character can have at times a supervening presence in the life of the performer. Yes, the scripted dialogue ended and the audience departed long ago. But patterns of thought and memory in the muscles can bring Sokrates back for more improvisation and wily narration.[55] This kind of transformational presence might be viewed as an important part of engaging with a dialogue: scripted work leads to unscripted, on-line decision-making.[56] Performance may lead to improvisation and philosophical authenticity.

When we focus on readers and audiences of these texts rather than performers, we find more plainly modeled processes of interruption, substitution, and supplementation. Audiences could, like Echekrates, be present at the dialogue, even more present than the interlocutors, for they have the opportunity not only to feel what was felt, but to interrupt in order to cultivate those feelings and others while also reflecting on their own past and present beliefs and generating better emotions and ideas.[57] Such audiences do not enact the pleasure-imitation model of

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[54] Gordon (1995: 739).

[55] Only certain characters should go "on-line". We might not want the actor playing Krito to make Krito-like decisions on-line. For Plato's concern about imitating only virtuous characters for precisely this reason, see *Republic* 3. Sokrates appears to have the ability to imitate despicable people such as the eristic duo without his representations going on-line. On Sokrates' typhonic nature, see Nightingale (1995: ch. 4).

[56] Gumbrecht (2004) aims to reconnect with "presence effects" in cultures centered primarily around "meaning effects". In a meaning culture, humans produce knowledge and aim to manipulate and transform the world, while in a presence culture, knowledge is typically revealed and humans—their flesh and blood—are in and a part of the world (80–85). It seems natural enough that, in our predominantly analytical culture, we should search for and find meaning effects in philosophical discourse and performance. But what are the presence effects of philosophical events? What if we could approach philosophical disciplines with a greater sensitivity to the practices and effects of inscribing one's body into the rhythms of the world?

[57] After all, the intradiegetic Simmias argues for thorough and persistent examination of beliefs about the most important matters (85cff.). The extradiegetic Echekrates appears to have allowed this part of Phaedo's retelling to settle in his bones.

Sophist and *Apology*. They do not by merely spectating acquire the best parts of the purposes and methods of philosophical activity. They can interrupt and intrude on the narrative in order to enliven or even modify events. Readers of Isokratean discourse can read selectively, take time to study and theorize, and engage in improvisatory gymnastics in order first to enact the lives of great men, then to outperform those lives and become written into future Isokratean discourse. It is sometimes appropriate for readers and audiences to think of themselves as the heroes of what they are seeing.[58] Krito should have heard the intradiegetic voices speaking to him. He should have accepted the challenge of taking the reported account into new directions; he should have submitted his own emotions and commitments. And readers have something to learn about reading from that model. Representations of philosophical discourse invite more than interpretation; they solicit and model participation and substitution.

I want to read at least two critiques in Nehamas' objection: we may fail to put ourselves in the interlocutor's place and explore what follows from that substitution not only when we shelve the book and go about the other activities of our lives, especially those that make us feel safe and certain, but also while we are occupied with the very task of reading the book. It would be a shame to turn away from the dialogue simply because you have closed the book; but it would be an even greater shame to be, in a certain sense, turning away from the dialogue while you are reading it. While there may often be a distinction between educational and other published texts on the one hand and personal, everyday life texts on the other, as well as between the sorts of practices that surround each, some educational texts have greater designs on every aspect of daily life. The models of literary and performative intrusion, substitution, and supplementation which I have considered here draw attention to how essential certain kinds of reading and engagement might be to the broader project of daily self-fashioning. One of Nehamas' points is that we often fail to bring important literary encounters to bear on our usual business. Plato and Isokrates suggest how important it is rather to bring our usual business to bear on literary encounters.

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[58] They might then have a better idea of what is supposed to happen after protreptic. Cf. *Clitophon*; Gonzalez in Scott (2002).

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PERFORMING AN ACADEMIC TALK: PROCLUS ON HESIOD'S *WORKS AND DAYS*

Patrizia Marzillo

Abstract

From Socrates onwards orality was the favoured means of expression for those who later loved to call themselves 'Platonic'. They used to discuss philosophical issues in debates that turned into academic lectures and seminars. According to Plato's original teaching, these talks should have not been "fixed" in written compositions, yet Plato himself put most of his doctrine into fictive "written dialogues". His followers intensified their connection with writing, above all for the purposes of teaching. On the one hand, they made notes on the lessons of their teachers; on the other, they enlarged their own talks in written compositions.

Neoplatonists' commentaries are often an amplification of their academic talks. The lessons held in the school of Athens or in Platonic circles coalesced into texts that mostly constitute Neoplatonic propaganda intended for the outside world. When Proclus directed the school in Athens, Plato and Aristotle were taught, but also theologian poets such as Homer, Orpheus, Hesiod. As the Suda reports, Proclus wrote commentaries on all of these poets, but the only one preserved is the commentary on Hesiod's *Works and Days*. Through a comparison of some passages from this commentary, I show how Proclus' commentary on Hesiod is not only a good example of an oral lesson that has become a written commentary, but also, importantly, of a text that aimed at the diffusion of Neoplatonic ideas among an audience of non-adherents.

As his biographer and disciple Marinus of Neapolis relates, the neo-Platonist Proclus was accustomed to write about 700 lines a day.[1] Besides being a very prolific author, he was also an indefatigable teacher since in addition to his writing he held several classes during the day and also gave evening talks.[2] What I propose to show in this paper is the profound interaction between the oral communication in his school and the written performance of his commentaries. In analysing in particular Proclus' commentary on Hesiod's *Works and Days* from the perspective of neo-Platonic allegoresis, I shall argue that the commentary belongs to the exoteric part of his production intended for a broader audience rather than simply for the oral academic circle that inspired it.

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[1] Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 22.

[2] Cf. Schissel (1926: 268–272).

I. *Poetic and Philosophical Orality*

To define orality is a very difficult task. When we think of orality, the first thing that comes to our mind is a historical moment in which writing had not yet been invented and literary patrimonies had to be transmitted orally. Classical philologists, for example, would immediately think of Homer, and Parry's famous theory about oral transmission of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[3]

Orality, however, could also be a choice. In several works,[4] Giovanni Reale distinguishes between a mimetic-poetic orality and a dialectical orality. Mimetic-poetic orality is the genre associated with the poets and oral transmission; what Reale calls "dialectical orality" is, by contrast, orality born of philosophy. Reale's definition seems improper: on the one hand, it is too connected with Plato's philosophy;[5] on the other, it separates poets from philosophers too radically. We cannot forget that very important pre-Socratics such as Parmenides and Empedocles preferred to put their thought into verse. They can be considered as philosopher poets in the same way as was Plato himself.[6]

However, Reale's definition can help us see a difference between an orality that is due to the absence of writing and an orality that is chosen by some philosophers either exclusively or as the basis of their writings. What introduces a change is, in my opinion, the birth of philosophical schools. Their development will lead to the neo-Platonic seminars in which oral and literary communication were two complementary ways of teaching.

Although literacy is fact by the period in which they lived, early Greek philosophers expressed themselves in different ways: Thales, Pythagoras, Cratylus and Socrates orally, Empedocles, Parmenides, and Xenophanes in epic verses, all other philosophers in prose.[7] Looking ahead to our discussion of neo-Platonic activity, we must briefly take into account Pythagorean oral tradition. In this school, orality was the consequence of the rule of silence in force among the students, of mysticism, and of

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[3] Parry (1971: 301–312 *et passim*).

[4] The most recent (2008: 161–167).

[5] Mimetic-poetic cannot refer but to Plato's opinion on poetry which, as an artistic expression, is an imitation of our world—which is, in turn, an imitation of the world of Forms so that the mimetic character is evident. Reale's 'dialectic orality' inevitably calls to mind Plato's dialectics.

[6] Cf. Long (2011: 292–302).

[7] See Patzer (2005: 19).

the esotericism that impregnated Pythagoras' doctrine. Maxims called "symbola" and Pythagoras' speeches were transmitted orally. The *symbola* were kind of proverbs which had to be interpreted allegorically;[8] Pythagoras' speeches had, by contrast, a paraenetical function.[9] At any rate, in Pythagoras' school there was nothing that could be associated with a dialogue between the teacher and his pupils. On the contrary, all our sources[10] are consistent in handing down an image of Pythagoras as an authoritarian teacher: he was the only one who could speak; his followers were not allowed to.

I.1. *Socrates and Plato*

With Socrates the situation changed. According to what Plato and Xenophon report, Socrates spent most of his time going around in the agora and conversing with people. Since Socrates did not leave anything in writing, all information about his method is supplied by his pupils. To remain true to his teachings, his followers developed a new literary genre, based on a dialogic performance which reproduced in a fictive way the maieutic method between 'teacher' and 'pupil'.[11] Plato is the best known author in this genre. His "written" orality was dialogical, that is, founded on a dialogue between an interrogator (mostly Socrates) and an interlocutor (usually an expert in the subject at issue).

Orality in Plato is, however, a very delicate issue. In the 60s there appeared a number of studies on Plato's so-called unwritten doctrine. This interpretative strand, emerging from the so-called 'school of Tübingen-Milan', had a strong ontological basis. It was promoted by Krämer, Gaiser, and Szlezák. According to the Tübingen-Milan school, Plato allegedly never 'fixed' in written composition the very important talks he gave to his disciples. He allowed his readers to enter "the vestibule of the Good"[12] through his dialogues, but only his oral lessons, reserved for his students, contained his complete teachings on the Good. His written works had a purely mnemonic function[13] and were intended, accordingly, for the same circle of students who had already learnt the entire doctrine from Plato's mouth and merely needed a reminder. This

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8 Cf. e.g. Proclus, *In Hes.* cclii.

9 Patzer (2006: 35).

10 Cf. e.g. Cic. *de nat. deor.* 1.10; Diog. Laert. 8.46; Iambl. *Vita Pyth.* 71–72.

11 Cf. Tarrant (1996: 129–147).

12 Plat. *Phileb.* 64c.

13 See Plat. *Phaedr.* 275a; 278a. For further discussion, see also Mathilde Cambron-Goulet's chapter in this volume.

approach has been abandoned in recent years, without any notable contribution to the understanding of Plato, and has been replaced by a new sociological, anthropological and historical approach. Since then many books have attempted to explain Plato according to an aesthetic principle. For example, Ch. Vassallo sketches an interpretation of Plato according to euphony and the stylistics of the audible and the speakable in Books II and III of *Republic*.

Harold Tarrant (1996) dealt with the relation between narrated dialogue, as a written genre, and the oral telling of intellectual tales. He speaks of Platonic dialogues as mimetic in terms of their ability to portray real-life speeches and situations. Furthermore, he admits that there are in Plato's late dialogues also, despite the fact that they look like self-sufficient pieces of writing, connections to the intellectual discussions held in the Academy. It cannot be denied, therefore, that orality and literacy played a complementary role in Plato's teaching.

I.2. *Proclus*

Neo-Platonists further intensified the connection between writing and oral teaching. They did not write dialogues, but ὑπομνήματα, "commentaries". The ὑπομνήματα could be of two kinds.[14] On the one hand, they could be "memoranda", "notes" taken during the lessons ἀπὸ φωνῆς (from the voice) of their teachers as, for instance, Proclus' commentary on Orpheus based on the lectures given by his teacher Syrianus.[15] Alternatively, they could be an enlargement in written composition of oral lessons held at the school. Or, in a third case, they could be "notes" discussed with the teacher which later become a written text. For example, four phases can be identified in the development of Proclus' sixth essay in his commentary on Plato's *Republic*.[16] They are: a lecture by Syrianus (71.3); subsequent discussions between Proclus and Syrianus (71.26–27); a lecture by Proclus on Plato's birthday (69.23); the writing-up of that lecture into the recorded essay.

The second case mentioned above applies to Proclus' commentary on Hesiod and to most of his commentaries. Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 22 reports how Proclus organized his teaching and above all how his lessons were the basis of his written works:

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[14] See Lamberz (1987: 1–5).
[15] Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 27.
[16] See Sheppard (1980: 32).

Κατὰ ταύτην δὴ ἐνεργῶν ὁ φιλόσοφος πᾶσαν μὲν θεολογίαν Ἑλληνικήν τε καὶ βαρβαρικὴν καὶ τὴν μυθικοῖς πλάσμασιν ἐπισκιαζομένην κατεῖδέ τε ῥᾳδίως καὶ τοῖς ἐθέλουσι καὶ δυναμένοις τε συνέπεσθαι εἰς φῶς ἤγαγεν, ἐξηγούμενός τε πάντα ἐνθουσιαστικώτερον καὶ εἰς συμφωνίαν ἄγων· πᾶσι δὲ τοῖς τῶν παλαιοτέρων συγγράμμασιν ἐπεξιών, ὅσον μὲν ἦν παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς 'γόνιμον', τοῦτο μετ᾽ ἐπικρίσεως εἰσεποιεῖτο, εἰ δέ τι 'ἀνεμιαῖον' ηὕρισκε, τοῦτο πάντη ὡς μῶμον ἀπῳκονομεῖτο· τὰ δέ γε ὑπεναντίως ἔχοντα τοῖς καλῶς τεθεῖσι μετὰ πολλῆς βασάνου ἀγωνιστικῶς διήλεγχε, ἔν τε ταῖς συνουσίαις δυνατῶς ἅμα καὶ σαφῶς ἐπεξεργαζόμενος ἕκαστα καὶ ἐν συγγράμασιν ἅπαντα καταβαλλόμενος. φιλοπονίᾳ γὰρ ἀμέτρῳ χρησάμενος, ἐξηγεῖτο τῆς αὐτῆς ἡμέρας πέντε, ὁτὲ δὲ καὶ πλείους πράξεις, καὶ ἔγραφε στίχους τὰ πολλὰ ἀμφὶ τοὺς ἑπτακοσίους. συνεγίγνετό τε τοῖς ἄλλοις φιλοσόφοις προϊὼν καὶ ἀγράφους ἑσπερινὰς πάλιν ἐποιεῖτο συνουσίας· καὶ ταῦτα πάντα μετὰ τὴν νυκτερινὴν ἐκείνην καὶ ἄγρυπνον θρησκείαν, μετὰ τὸ προσκυνῆσαι ἥλιον ἀνίσχοντα μεσουρανοῦντά τε καὶ ἐπὶ δύσιν ἰόντα.

Conforming all his actions to this virtue, the philosopher had no trouble in understanding the whole Hellenic and foreign mythology, even those revelations which had been obscured by mythical fictions; and these he expounded for those who would or could attain their elevation, giving to all of them profoundly religious interpretations, and relating them all in a perfect harmony. The writings of the most ancient authors he studied thoroughly, and after having subjected them to criticism, he gathered whatever thoughts he therein found to be useful and fruitful; but whatever seemed to lack force or value he set aside, branding them ridiculous puerilities. What however was contrary to true principles, he very energetically discussed, submitting it to thorough-going criticism, in his lectures treating each one of these theories with as much clearness as vigor, and recording all his observations in books. For without stint did he give himself up to his love for work, daily teaching five periods, and sometimes more, and writing much, about 700 lines. Nor did this labor hinder him from visiting other philosophers, from giving purely oral evening lectures, from practicing his devotions during the night, for which he denied himself sleep; and further, from worshipping the sun at dawn, noon, and dusk.[17]

Here it is also reported that Proclus studied thoroughly the works of the most ancient authors and that he commented on them in his lessons. We can imagine that the evening talks were purely oral discussions, whereas the results of his daily teaching activity were destined for publication.[18]

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[17] Translation by Guthrie (1986).

[18] καταβάλλομαι means according to LSJ s.v. 7: "to be the author of", "commit to writing".

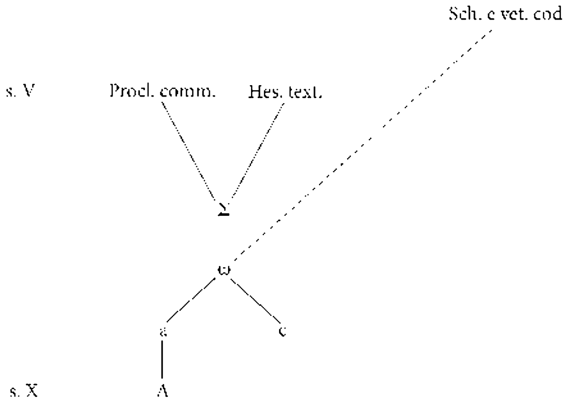
When Proclus became director of the school of Athens in the 5th century AD, the academic programme for beginners focussed on the study of Greek poetry; for intermediates, on Aristotle and Plato; and, for advanced students, on Orpheus and Chaldean theology. With the exception of Aristotle, about whom, according to all our sources, Proclus wrote nothing specific, all the authors mentioned were the subjects of his commentaries—Plato, of course, and the 'theologian poets' such as Homer, Orpheus, Hesiod, and the Chaldean Oracles as well. Most of the commentaries attributed to Proclus are fragmentary texts of varying length known from passages quoted by Proclus himself or transmitted by other authors. Amongst the commentaries on Plato's dialogues (on *Cratylus*, *Timaeus*, *Parmenides*, *First Alcibiades*, and *Republic*), I refer specifically to the commentary on *Cratylus* where, as the title announces, we find ἐκ τῶν τοῦ φιλοσόφου Πρόκλου σχολιῶν εἰς τὸν Κράτυλον Πλάτωνος ἐκλογαὶ χρήσιμοι ("useful extracts from the scholia on Plato's *Cratylus* by Proclus the philosopher"). Apart from the word "scholia" used here in the same way as in the Byzantine tradition as a synonym for "commentary composed intentionally in the form of 'scholia'", that is, as short marginal notes, what captures our attention is the word ἐκλογαί, 'extracts'. Proclus' commentary was subjected to strict selection, leaving only those passages of his work that were considered 'useful'. Even though this is an anthology, when we look at the vast amount of fragments edited by G. Pasquali in 1908, we can only presume that Proclus' commentary was very, very long—and "length" can actually be a sign of preceding orality connected to the teaching activity. We can imagine that, along with preceding literature on *Cratylus* which Proclus widely criticised according to the method described by Marinus, a lively in-school discussion had taken place which Proclus later reported in his commentary in its entirety.

II. *The Commentary on Hesiod*

II.1. *Philological Excursus*

The commentary on Hesiod's *Works and Days* mentioned in the lexicon Suda (π 2473) shared the same destiny as the commentary on Plato's *Cratylus*. It too must have been very long and—in order to guarantee its survival—the scribes evidently preferred to shorten it and to hand it down in the margins of Hesiod's *Works and Days* together with other commentaries on Hesiod from different sources. The overall name *scholia*

vetera (that is, ancient scholia) has been given to this mixture of Proclus' material with other fragments which in later manuscripts are also copied without Hesiod's text. It is possible to show by a diagram (below) how the summaries of Proclus' and other ancient authors' commentaries became fused:



Looking at the vast amount of *scholia vetera* on Hesiod's *Works and Days*, we should first ask ourselves which material can really be attributed to the neo-Platonic philosopher. Many attempts were undertaken[19] before Agostino Pertusi discovered that the manuscript A from the tenth century differentiated the *scholia* by using alphabetical-numerical signs for some, and different drawings for the others. The *scholia* introduced by alphabetical-numerical markers, because of their contents also, seem to be genuinely by Proclus.[20] Some uncertainty remains where the codex A has a lacuna; neither the content nor palaeographic criteria offer precise information but, in the main, the question concerning the authorship can be considered solved.

II.2. *Allegoresis*

I now focus on a number of features of Proclus' commentary on Hesiod.

Drawing on the academic program mentioned above, Faraggiana di Sarzana argued that Proclus' commentary on Hesiod was a work written exclusively for the school circle.[21] By doing so, she neglected a very

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19 Cf. Marzillo (2010: lxv–lxx).
20 Cf. Pertusi (1951: 150–159).
21 Faraggiana di Sarzana (1978:19), and (1981: 23–25).

important aspect of this commentary: the allegoresis, that is, the allegorical interpretation of poets as systematically practised by the neo-Platonists.

As we know, Plato did not consider poetry a vehicle of knowledge, because it could preserve dangerous falsehoods; for this reason he excluded it from his ideal state.[22] Yet, on the other hand, he professed the doctrine of 'enthusiasm', according to which he believed that poets, when divinely inspired, were able to speak the truth without possessing any knowledge themselves.[23] Basing his work on this latter assumption, Proclus propounded a poetic theory in his commentary on Plato's *Republic*. He classified poetry as divinely inspired, didactic and mimetic.[24] In Proclus' view, Plato's rejection of poetry concerned only the last category, mimetic poetry, which is an imitation of our world (itself in turn, an imitation of the world of Forms) and, therefore, does not provide any true knowledge. On the contrary, divinely inspired poetry has to be studied and commented on because it hides metaphysical and theological truths under the veil of allegory. With "divinely inspired poetry", Proclus was referring to Homer, Hesiod and Orpheus. It must be emphasized that neo-Platonic allegorical exegesis does not exclude the literal meaning (as the allegoresis of the Stoics, for example, did), but includes it in its explanations. For instance, Hera is not only seen allegorically as the unity of all powers connected to the element 'air' according to neo-Platonic philosophy, but also as the traditional goddess of the Greek pantheon.[25] That is why I prefer to speak of neo-Platonic allegoresis as "complementary allegoresis".[26]

II.3. *Aims of Neo-Platonic Allegoresis*

Having explained how Proclus could reconcile his work on poets with Plato's hostility towards them, it remains to clarify why Proclus and other neo-Platonists decided to comment on poets and to include them in their academic curriculum. At this point it is important to remember that the Platonic school in Athens had a very strong competitor from the first centuries AD onwards: Christianity was the emerging power slowly eclipsing

[22] Plat. *Resp*. 10, 595a–608b.
[23] See *Apol*. 22b–c; cf. also *Phaedr*. 245a and *Ion* 533d.
[24] Procl. *In Remp*. 1.196.18–199.28.
[25] Bernard (1990: 15 *et passim*).
[26] Cf. Marzillo (2010: xiv).

paganism. So the neo-Platonists, engaged in a fight to determine who was first—and, therefore, who was the best—, began commenting on all the important ancient poets in order to demonstrate that they were the propagators of Platonic ideas *avant la lettre*. To return to Hesiod, Proclus transformed him into a neo-Platonic philosopher by interpreting his verses allegorically. That Proclus chose to comment on such a familiar author for the Greek world reveals his programmatic intent to reach a broader audience.[27] Indeed, commenting on Hesiod meant, for Proclus, having the opportunity to communicate Platonic messages through content known to everyone.

II.4. *Traces of Orality*

As we have seen, "inspired poetry" (that is, Homer, Hesiod, and Orpheus) was at the basis of the academic program at the School of Athens. According to what Marinus records, we can imagine that Proclus first gave daily classes on Hesiod and then put into writing not only his ideas, but also what came from the discussion with his pupils and other philosophers. I argue on this basis that Proclus' commentary on Hesiod was born out of a complementary context of orality and writing.

Like the commentary on Plato's *Cratylus*, the commentary on Hesiod must also have been very long. Although it has not been transmitted in its entirety, some 150 pages of Greek text are extant—a text full of recapitulations, repetitions, brachylogies. These are due, on the one hand, to the fact that during the lessons students would ask questions and the teacher then had to give detailed explanations so that a concept would be repeated again and again (a kind of "explicative length"). On the other hand, brachylogies can be somehow justified if we consider that some things were taken for granted, whereby the teacher did not need to explain them more accurately. We find an example of recapitulation in the text quoted below. Here we are at an important point in Hesiod's *Works and Days*: the introductory section is over and the discourse from v. 383 onwards moves more specifically towards the description of agricultural works. Proclus writes (*In Hes.* clxi):

[27] See Marzillo (2010: xxxiii).

σοὶ δ’εἰ πλούτου θυμὸς ἐέλδεται· τὰ μὲν ἔμπροσθεν ῥηθέντα πάντα κοινὰ παιδεύματα ἦν εἰς πολιτικὴν τείνοντα ζωήν, ἀναμιμνήσκοντα τῶν τῆς κακίας αἰτιῶν καὶ τῆς ποικιλίας τῶν βίων καὶ τυποῦντα γνώμαις τισὶ τὸ ἦθος. τὰ δὲ ῥηθησόμενα τῶν μὲν κακοπραγιῶν ἀπάγει τὸν ἀκροατήν, ἄγει δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν γεωργικὸν βίον καὶ τὸν ἐκ τούτου δίκαιον πόρον, καιροὺς ὑπογράφοντα καὶ τύπους ἀροτριάσεων, ἀμήτου, φυτείας, τρυγητοῦ, τῶν τοιούτων πάντων. τούτοις δὲ ἑξῆς περὶ ναυτιλίας διαλέξεται τοῖς καὶ ἀπὸ ταύτης τρέφεσθαι βουλομένοις ὁμοίως ὑπογράφων τὰς τοῦ πλεῖν ὥρας καὶ τὰς τῶν πλοίων ἐπιμελείας.

If your heart longs for wealth: What has been said before were all general teachings aiming at civic life, which recalled to mind the causes of evil and of the variety of life styles, and which tried to shape our character through some practical maxims. What will be said, instead, leads the hearer away from misdeeds and brings him to agricultural life and to its just way of making a living, by sketching out the exact time and general instructions for ploughing, harvesting, planting, grape gathering and all such things. Afterwards, Hesiod will discuss seafaring for those who want to take their means of subsistence also from it, by setting out in outline in a similar way the sailing seasons and care of the ships.[28]

Proclus’ tone is highly didactic. He reaffirms the function of the two stories told earlier by Hesiod (Pandora and the five generations of men already commented on by Proclus in previous fragments),[29] then he shows the plan of Hesiod’s work. The same is to be found in Proclus’s introduction to the commentary[30] and at numerous other points.[31]

The lemma-structure in this commentary can be considered as further evidence of oral lectures later becoming a written work. Apart from two cases where there is text corruption, the lemma is always present in the commentary on Hesiod. The structure of present-day lemmata is not the same as the structure we take to be typical of Proclus’ time, but it is attributable to the shortening activity of the scribes who used lemmata—often identical with the beginning of a verse or of a section—only to help the reader find the part of Hesiod’s text to which the commentary referred, as Van Thiel[32] has shown. The manuscripts, indeed, do

[28] Special thanks go to Michael Gagarin and Elizabeth Minchin for their valuable suggestions regarding my English translation.

[29] Procl. *In Hes.* xliii–lxvii and lxviii–xciii.

[30] Procl. *In Hes.* i.

[31] For example, *In Hes.* xciv, ccxxiii, ccxxxiv, cclix.

[32] Van Thiel (1989: 24–26).

not offer uniformity of lemmata, sometimes presenting more text, sometimes less, sometimes the first and last words of the parts commented on connected by the formula ἕως τοῦ,[33] and twice there is no lemma, as we have already noted. But if Proclus used the same method in this work as in his commentaries on Plato, it can be assumed that the commentary on Hesiod in its original format had the following structure: first, there was set out the full text to be commented on and then appeared Proclus' explanations. And this is possible only in an oral context that was later turned into a written composition. Even if his students had Hesiod's text before them, Proclus had first to *read* it in order to explain it line-for-line, clarifying orally the entire meaning of both a section and single words or expressions.

The preliminary remarks made by Proclus *In Hes.* i. 1–12 (Marzillo) also sound like a very first oral lesson:

τὴν μὲν Θεογονίαν ὁ γενναῖος Ἡσίοδος δοκεῖ μοι συνθεῖναι πάσης τῆς περὶ τὸν κόσμον τῶν θεῶν προνοίας τὰς ἀρχὰς ἐθελήσας παραδοῦναι τοῖς μεθ' ἑαυτὸν κατὰ τὴν πάτριον τῶν Ἑλλήνων φήμην ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς θρυλουμένων μύθων τὸ σύγγραμμα πᾶν ἐργασάμενος· τὰ δὲ Ἔργα καὶ τὰς Ἡμέρας τὸ βιβλίον εἰς τὴν οἰκονομίαν καὶ ἀπράγμονα ζωὴν παρακαλῶν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγοραίου καὶ φορτικῆς, οὐχ ἁπλῶς εἰς ἡδονὴν ἀποβλέπων τῶν ἐντευξομένων, ἀλλὰ ταύτην μὲν πάρεργον θέμενος, τὴν δὲ ὠφέλειαν τὴν εἰς τὸ ἦθος προηγούμενον σκοπὸν ποιησάμενος, ἵνα τὸν ἴδιον βίον κοσμήσαντες οὕτω καὶ τῆς περὶ τῶν θείων γνώσεως ἐπήβολοι γενώμεθα. διὸ καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου προσήκει τοῦ συγγράμματος ἄρχεσθαι· τοὺς γὰρ τὸ ἦθος ἀκοσμήτους τὸν κόσμον γνῶναι παντελῶς ἀδύνατον.

In my opinion, the noble Hesiod composed his *Theogony* because he wanted to hand down to posterity the origins of all divine providence for the world according to the inherited tradition of the Greeks by developing his entire work on the basis of the stories told in temples. The book *Works and Days* was written, on the contrary, because he wanted to call men from a busy and vulgar life at the market to their household and to a quiet life. In doing this, he does not look exclusively at his future readers' pleasure, but he considers it as secondary and sets himself utility as his primary purpose so that we first order our own character and then can also participate in the knowledge of divine things. That is why it is reasonable to begin with this work; for it is absolutely impossible that those who are unordered in their own character are aware of the world order.

[33] Examples are to be seen from *In Hes.* clxxi onwards in the manuscripts A, Q, Z, and B.

Here, it is clear that Proclus announces how his course on Hesiod will be ordered: first the *Works and Days* and then the *Theogony*.

Another fragment clearly refers to the school and to the κοινωνία-rule in force in it:[34]

ὅσοι μὲν εἰς τὴν χρείαν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ἀπήγαγον τὸ κοινωνικόν, οὐκ ἔλαβον ἀρχὴν ἀσφαλῆ τοῦ τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἡμῶν κοινωνίας δόγματος· ἡ γὰρ χρεία, εἰ καὶ ἀναγκάσασα, ἀλλ' οὔπω ἀγαθόν. ὅσοι δὲ εἰς τὸ κατὰ φύσιν ἡμῖν εἶναι τὸ πρὸς ἀλλήλους δίκαιον ἀπέβλεψαν, ἀρραγῆ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν ἔλαβον τοῦ τῆς κοινωνίας ἡμῶν σκοποῦ· πάντων γὰρ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ἕκαστον ἀγαθόν. τοῦτο δὴ οὖν καὶ Ἡσίοδος εἰδὼς τὸν τοῦ Διὸς νόμον ἀξιοῖ τὸν Πέρσην ὁρᾶν τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ζῴοις δεδωκότα ἐσθίειν ἄλληλα καὶ τῶν ἀσθενεστέρων τὰ δυνατώτερα κρατεῖν θοινᾶσθαί τε αὐτά· τοῖς δὲ ἀνθρώποις δικαιοσύνην σύμφυτον ἐνέσπειρε καὶ τὸ κοινωνικὸν ἐνέθηκεν αὐτῶν τῇ φύσει· διόπερ οἱ ἄδικοι τοῖς ἀλόγοις ἐοίκασι τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ἀποδράντες ζωήν. μηδεὶς οὖν προάγων ἡμῖν τὴν ἀλληλοφαγίαν τῶν θηρίων ἀξιούτω καὶ ἡμᾶς οὕτω ζῆν· κοινωνικὸν γὰρ ζῷον γέγονεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ὁ τῆς κοινωνίας αὐτῷ νόμος ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔγκειται κατὰ φύσιν. ἀδικίᾳ δὲ πάσῃ πρὸς κοινωνίαν καὶ κοινωνίᾳ πρὸς ἀδικίαν ἐστὶ πόλεμος· στάσεων γὰρ αἰτία πάντων μάλιστα ἡ ἀδικία, τὸ δὲ κοινωνικὸν ἀστασίαστον. καὶ ὀρθῶς ὁ Πλάτων (*Resp.* 1.351a–e) εἶπεν οὐδὲ συστῆναι δυνατὸν εἶναι τὴν ἀδικίαν χωρὶς

All people who reduced the pursuit of being together to a human need did not acquire an unshaken basis of the doctrine concerning our reciprocal bond; for the need, even though it is compelling, is not yet a good thing. On the other hand, all who considered the fact that just behaviour to each other is natural for us, grasped the indestructible foundation of the goal of our being together; what is natural for each thing is good. Hesiod too, then, knew this and requires Perses to look at the fact that Zeus' law granted other living beings to eat each other and the more powerful ones to dominate the weaker; in men, by contrast, it sowed an innate feeling for justice and instilled the pursuit of being together into their nature. Therefore, unjust people are similar to animals since they have fled from the life suited to man. Nobody should thus urge upon us the mutual devouring of beasts and require us too to live like that; for man is a living being born to be in a community, and the rule of being together is in him from his father onwards according to nature. Every unjust act wages a war against life in common, and life in common against injustice; for injustice is mainly the reason for all revolts, whereas the pursuit of living together is not liable to disturbance. And Plato correctly said that injustice cannot even come into being without justice; for the ones who want to

[34] *In Hes.* cxix on *Works and Days* 274–280.

δικαιοσύνης· δεῖν γὰρ τοὺς συναδικήσαντας τά γε πρὸς ἀλλήλους δίκαια φυλάττειν ἢ καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀδικοῦντας μηδὲν δύνασθαι κοινῇ ποτε πρᾶξαι. εἰ οὖν ἄνθρωπος εἶ, φύσει κοινωνικὸν ζῷον εἶ, εἰ δὲ φύσει κοινωνικὸν ζῷον εἶ, παρὰ φύσιν σοι τὸ ἀδικεῖν· οὐ γὰρ κοινωνίας ἀλλὰ διασπασμοῦ τὸ ἀδικεῖν αἴτιον, τῶν ἀδικουμένων τοῖς ἀδικοῦσιν ὁμονοεῖν μὴ δυναμένων.

commit a crime together have to maintain justice at least towards each other or they can never do anything together if they commit unjust acts to each other. So if you are a man, you are, according to your nature, a living being born to be in a community, and if you are a living being born to be in a community, it is against your nature to do wrong; for doing wrong is the cause not of unity, but of division, since victims and offenders cannot be of one mind.

This passage leads us to the question whether Proclus' commentary was intended only for his students. The allegoresis in it proves that it was for a broader audience, for, as I mentioned above, allegoresis was a popular means of reaching a broader audience. Neo-Platonists used Greek myths known to everyone to make their point. Plotinus had already interpreted Homer and Hesiod allegorically in terms of his own philosophy. For example, the three generations of gods, Uranus, Cronus and Zeus mentioned in Hesiod's *Theogony*, are used to explain his three main hypostases (the One, the Intellect, and the Soul).[35] In Porphyry the popular character of allegoresis is more evident. His message is directed to different types of readers and also to the common man.[36] This is especially clear in the myths chosen by him from Homer and Hesiod for allegorical interpretation. In his *De antro nympharum*, Porphyry offers an explanation of the cave of the nymphs in *Od.* 13, trying to illustrate his doctrine of the soul. Odysseus is understood here as the man who has to endure every stage of reproduction and the cave is the place where this process ends and men can return to themselves and to their origins. To clarify, Porphyry also introduces Pandora's box and gives his allegorical exegesis on it (*De antro* 30).

Pandora's myth told by Hesiod[37] must have been the subject of a thorough commentary by neo-Platonists from the third century onwards in order to explain the destiny of souls, assuming that Origen in attacking Celsus (*Contra Celsum* 4.38) refers to its allegoresis as if to a current

[35] *Enn.* 5.1.7; 5.1.4; 5.8.12; see also Hadot (1981).
[36] Pépin (1966: 261–263).
[37] Both in the *Works and Days* 60–89 and in the *Theog.* 521–528.

practice. Besides Porphyry, Plotinus (4.3.14) too interpreted the story, and Proclus did the same two centuries later in his commentary on Hesiod. The fragments between liii and lxvii are dedicated to Pandora. The story is well-known. To take revenge on Prometheus, who had stolen fire for mankind, Zeus sent Pandora to Prometheus' brother Epimetheus. Although Prometheus recommended that he should not trust any gift coming from Zeus, Epimetheus accepted the woman. Pandora opened the box she had been given by the gods and set free all the evils of mankind leaving only Hope inside.

Proclus sees Pandora as a 'demon', a middle being between men and gods, since she resembles the goddesses but also has a human shape. The function of demons is, according to Proclus, to distribute evils in the world and that is what Pandora does by opening the box. In other words, Proclus explains the presence of evils[38] in the world in neo-Platonic terms through Hesiod's verses. Pandora is also identified with the irrational life granted to souls in order to tolerate their life in the body, and with the cause of the Fall of souls into the world of becoming. When we look at one of the conclusive texts on the topic we are reminded of what we have also seen in Porphyry:[39]

ἀλλὰ γυνὴ χείρεσσι· ἔστι μὲν ὁ πίθος ἡ μία δύναμις τῆς εἱμαρμένης ἡ πάντων τῶν ἀπονεμομένων ταῖς πεσούσαις εἰς τὴν γένεσιν ψυχαῖς χωρητικὴ καλλιόνων ἢ χειρόνων παθῶν, δἰ ἃ εὔμοιροί τινές εἰσιν ἢ κακόμοιροι. περιέχει γὰρ οὗτος τοὺς παῤ Ὁμήρῳ (Ω 527) δύο πίθους τοὺς τῶν κηρῶν πλήρεις. διόπερ ἐν τούτῳ καὶ τὰ ἀγαθά. καὶ Ἐλπὶς ἐναπελείφθη ἐν αὐτῷ μόνη τοῖς δυστυχοῦσι παραμυθίαν φέρουσα διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀμεινόνων προσδοκίαν καὶ τὴν μεταβολὴν

But the woman … with her hands: The jar is the sole force of destiny which embraces all better and worse happenings that are distributed to the souls fallen into the world of becoming. Because of that, some are well-endowed by fortune, others are ill-fated. For this jar contains both jars that Homer mentions, and is filled with all fates. In it, that is, there is also what is good. And only Hope stayed in it, bringing comfort to unhappy people through the expectation of something better and the reversal of present evils. That the

[38] Proclus dealt with evils also in his commentaries on Plato's *Timaeus* (1.372.25–381.21), *Republic* (1.37.2–39.1) and *Parmenides* (829.23–831.24) and wrote a small book entirely dedicated to them, *On the existence of evils*, in which he explains in detail the essence of good and evil. Evils are not part of things that in fact exist, because they do not originate from good (ch. 2); on the contrary, their causes are manifold (ch. 47). They all come about, however, through impotence and insufficiency (cf. e.g. chap. 42).

[39] Procl. *In Hes.* lxvi.

τῶν παρόντων κακῶν. ἀναπετάνυσι δὲ ἡ γυνὴ τὸν πίθον ὡς ἐκφαίνουσα τὰς κῆρας ταῖς ψυχαῖς, ὧν ἐστι παρεκτική, καὶ ἀναγκαίας δεικνῦσα δἰ ἑαυτὴν ἠλογημέναις αὐταῖς, τούτων δὲ σωφρονιζουσῶν ἀπὸ τῆς πτώσεως καὶ ἐξανιστασῶν ἀπ᾽ αὐτῆς.

woman opens the jar means that she shows to the souls the fates she has the power to bring about and points out that they are compulsory for the souls which, because of her, are abandoned by reason; the fates, in turn, make efforts to bring the souls from the fall back to reason and to lift them from it.

Complex concepts like "fall of the soul" are mixed with every-day situations such as "the expectation of better times". If we go through Proclus' fragments we will find many examples of allegoresis where a literal, "normal" plane, universally easy to understand, is entwined with genuine neo-Platonic philosophy. Here Proclus attempts to arrange a neo-Platonic course for beginners on the basis of Hesiod. As we know, Hesiod was a schoolbook not only in neo-Platonic circles, but also for common people. So we can consider as "beginners" not only the students in Athens, but also the "readers" for whom an allegorical exegesis of Hesiod could make it easier to learn the cornerstones of neo-Platonic philosophy. For example, with regard to Pandora's story, this was the way to show that the presence of evils in the world derives from the activity of distribution by demons and thereby to provide an explanation different from that offered by the Christians.

III. *Conclusions*

For much of antiquity orality was a necessary condition; but there came a time when for some it was the expression of a choice. Philosophers such as Pythagoras and Socrates preferred to pass on their teaching orally. Plato imitated Socrates' method in his written dialogues. In neo-Platonic schools orality became a complementary tool to teaching and propaganda.

Proclus was a teacher. His commentaries were often an amplification of his academic talks. Thus the commentary on Hesiod, before becoming a written work, was a basic course at the School of Athens. Proclus' lessons and the subsequent debates held with his pupils coalesced in a text that aimed to spread neo-Platonic ideas amongst common people.

As we have seen, neo-Platonists utilized a new kind of allegoresis, the primary purpose of which was to defend Platonic doctrine, which

was being threatened by the growth of Christianity. A problem which would preoccupy neo-Platonists henceforth was how to reconcile Plato's condemnation of poetry with their own work on the poets. In Proclus' time, however, this must have been a primary issue, since he felt it necessary to elaborate a poetic theory that allowed him to limit Plato's condemnation to so-called mimetic poetry, and thus to comment on the 'theologian poets' Homer, Orpheus and Hesiod.

Of all these commentaries only Proclus' scholia on Hesiod survived. Unfortunately, we do not fully know the original theoretical complexion of the commentary on Hesiod since only fragments are preserved, but Proclus' intention is easy to see. Through it, Proclus wanted to reach a larger audience. By interpreting such an ancient poet as Hesiod and by attributing his own doctrine to him, Proclus intended to show the antiquity of Platonic thought and wished to demonstrate that it was the only possible way to live and to understand life. Proclus' attitude is a criticism *ex silentio* of Christians. Instead of attacking their thinking, he sought, under the aegis of neo-Platonism, the recovery of pagan *paideia*, which was, in his opinion, indestructible and perfect.

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THE CRITICISM—AND THE PRACTICE—OF LITERACY IN THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITION*

Mathilde Cambron-Goulet

Abstract

Is the philosophers' practice of literacy, as described in their works, consistent with their criticism of it? This paper aims to answer this question, firstly, by comparing the ancient philosophers' criticism of literacy to their practice of it, through the study of what various authors from various periods say about reading and writing. On the other hand, since earlier works on this topic have proposed that the classical period witnessed a sudden and, to a certain extent, definitive turn to literacy, and have tried to locate this turn in time, I have examined the situation in a broader perspective, over a longer period of time. The results show that, if we consider how philosophers criticize literacy and how they describe themselves in their own discourses, literacy patterns tended to remain similar until Late Antiquity; and that, in spite of Aristotle's new use of literacy, the criticism we find in Plato lingers on. As a result, what we usually call the transition from an oral tradition to a written tradition could be better viewed as a cultural continuity.

When we read ancient works such as Plato's *Phaedrus*, we are surprised to find that the Greek philosophers strongly criticize literacy, as we are nevertheless confronted with a written text. Is it not paradoxical to reject a technology while still using it? Or is the philosophers' practice of literacy, as described in their works, consistent with their criticism? It often seems doubtful to us in the modern world that knowledge rationally acquired by philosophy could be transmitted by means of oral technologies.[1] For ancient philosophers, quite the opposite seems to hold true, as it is the acquisition of knowledge through written texts that seems to be problematic.

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[1] This question has been abundantly discussed in the last thirty years. See Goody (1979), Havelock (1982), Couch (1989), Glassner (2007), Robson (2007), Goody (2007).

In our account of oral societies, learning depends upon the relationship between the listening audience and the performer. For instance, the transmission of Homeric epics was assured by the bard, whose duties included both narrating the epics and evaluating the apprenticeship of the participant in festive circumstances, which presupposes a friendly convivial atmosphere among the participants. Moreover, it may be expected that the performer at least partially belongs to the community and chooses a tale which is suitable for the audience.[2] Learning is in this context understood as being dependent on discussion and seems self-evidently connected to friendship. The same data apply to philosophers as well, who, desiring to convey scientific knowledge, often reject literacy. If students could learn through books—that is, outside the boundaries of friendship and discussion—no mechanism could evaluate their apprenticeship. The use of literacy is thus circumscribed by the will to maintain that learning relationship.

Previous works by Eric Havelock (1982) and Tony Lentz (1989) have demonstrated, respectively, that Plato and Isocrates could be called writers in the modern sense of the word and have consequently both postulated that, in the classical period, the dynamic tension between an oral and a written tradition took a sudden and, to a certain extent, definitive turn to literacy, at least in the philosophical field. My broader study aims to show, however, that literacy patterns tended to remain similar until Late Antiquity (although there may of course be some exceptions) when it comes to the way in which philosophers criticize literacy and describe themselves in their own discourses. As a result, what we usually call the transition from an oral tradition to a written tradition should preferably be considered in terms of a cultural continuity.

Two major remarks should be made about the methodology used in this paper. First, my very broad corpus includes both authors usually considered as philosophers (like Plato or Plotinus) and philosophers' biographers, such as Diogenes Laertius and Eunapius, for the latter group of authors offers precious testimonies about the actual practices of their subjects that are not always recorded in the philosophers' own works. It should be noted that such a broad corpus requires some selection and

[2] Maybe the best way to see this relationship between performer and participants is to observe what happens when the teller chooses the wrong tale at the wrong moment, for example, Demodocus at *Od.* VIII. 521–541. See Leary (1975), Tedlock (1977), Ben-Amos (1971).

that the boundaries of the field of philosophy were very vague at that time. Consequently, this collection is a rather artificial one: historians or other intellectuals were most often not radically different from the philosophers. For instance, some authors nowadays considered as geographers or grammarians were in many cases known as philosophers in their lifetime.[3] Second, I have not focussed on works that take literacy as their subject, such as the *Phaedrus*, for such an emphasis would probably have altered or at least influenced the eventual results. In Goffman's vocabulary, the authors *perform* in accordance to their discourse and thus refrain from showing themselves as using literacy while criticizing it. In the light of these comments, I will now examine how various philosophers, from different schools and periods, criticize literacy and describe their own practice of it.

I. *The Criticism of Literacy*

A first look at the texts shows that Greek philosophers made a clear distinction between reading and writing in their criticism of literacy. This distinction is surprising if we consider that literacy is typically understood as a means of communication, and that reading and writing are intertwined, given that what is written is meant to be read. The conditions of reading in Antiquity probably explain this distinction, since the materiality of the book seems to have been an issue in the way ancient philosophers understood literacy. Therefore, it does not affect the use of writing as much as the practice of reading. I will now examine how philosophers proceed to reject reading and writing separately.

I.1. *Reading*

The first problem for the philosophers is that books are not always meant to be read; they are also used to boost the owner's prestige.[4] This quality is evident in Lucian's *Remarks Addressed to an Illiterate Book-Fancier*, where there is clear mockery of a reader who does not understand what he reads but boasts of his books anyway, in the hope that he

[3] Strabo, for example, is almost never considered as a philosopher nowadays, though Plutarch labels him so. See *Life of Lucullus*, 28, 8. The boundaries of Antiquity as an historical era are problematic as well: see Lynch (1972: 7, 165 and 197) for a discussion of the so-called closing of the philosophical schools.

[4] Lardet (2007: 509).

will be taken for a literate person. The legends about the transmission of Aristotle's library also suggest that even books that are not in good material condition may add to the reputation of their possessor, based on the standing of a previous owner, and regardless of their content, which is described as almost illegible after the books had been buried for many years and spoiled by humidity and worms.[5] Books may be loaded with a mythical value connected to their history as material objects.[6] In addition, books were precious and expensive goods, so that they could be used not only to show one as a literate person but also to suggest wealth.[7] Because books have a material value separate from their intellectual value, the content may not matter to the owner; literacy in that case fails to transmit information, as the information is not guaranteed to reach the reader. This defeat of literacy is not overcome by the mere reading of the book: the contents are not easily uncovered by the reader, who faces many challenges connected to the material nature of the book when trying to acquire knowledge through reading. As some philosophers themselves fancied beautiful books,[8] it is hard for them to reject completely this attitude towards written texts, and they have very good reasons to be sensitive to the material conditions of books.

Being used to printed sources, we are not always aware that deciphering a manuscript could present some serious difficulties. Arrian, who notices that problem, expresses the issue very clearly: "every man will read a book with more pleasure or even with more ease, if it is written in fairer characters".[9] "Fair characters" sometimes means bigger characters, as we see in Plutarch's *Life of Cato the Elder*, where Cato writes a history book for his son in big characters.[10] The ancient philosophers seem to be sensitive to the fact that a mediocre manuscript could bring about ambiguities, and Aristotle's opinion in the *Rhetoric* is that "generally speaking, that which is written should be easy to read or easy to utter".[11] Aristotle notices that diacritic signs, which were new at that time, make it

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[5] Athenaeus, I, 3a; Strabo, XIII, 1, 54; Plutarch, *Sylla*, 26, 468a; Diogenes Laertius, V, 12–13 and 51–57.
[6] Scheid-Tissinier (1994: 54 f.).
[7] Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, III, 17; Diogenes Laertius, III, 66; IV, 4; Suetonius, *Lives of the Grammarians and Rhetoricians*, 17; Plutarch, *Life of Lucullus*, 42, 1–2; Petronius, *Satyricon*, 46.
[8] Diogenes Laertius, III, 9;18; see Thompson (1940: 20).
[9] Arrian, *Discourses*, II, 23, trans. Long.
[10] XX, 7.
[11] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1407b10–12 trans. Freese.

easier for readers to understand the text correctly when the punctuation is not obvious, but that these are not always sufficient.[12] The same is true for Porphyry, as he remarks that the mediocrity of Plotinus' handwriting provokes ambiguities which could otherwise be avoided. "In writing", Porphyry records, "he did not form the letters with any regard to appearance or divide his syllables correctly, and he paid no attention to spelling."[13] Sometimes the poor condition of texts is also caused by negligent copyists.[14] Hence this material problem, far from only being secondary to the contents of the text, seems to have played a significant role in the ancient philosophers' account of literacy, in Late Antiquity as well as in the classical period.

Even a beautifully lettered text could cause ambiguities, as Aristotle remarks in the following lines from the *Rhetoric*, where he describes what a text that is easy to read should look like:

> Now, this is not the case when there is a number of connecting particles, or when the punctuation is hard, as in the writings of Heraclitus. For it is hard, since it is uncertain to which word another belongs, whether to that which follows or that which precedes.[15]

Moreover, it is impossible for the reader to question the text as he could do with a live interlocutor during a discussion. This impossibility is an issue in Plato's analysis of the situation in the *Phaedrus*:

> The same is true of written words. You'd think they were speaking as if they had some understanding, but if you question anything that has been said because you want to learn more, it continues to signify just that very same thing forever.[16]

I should point out that, in this instance, orality is shown as being superior to literacy, which is not necessarily the case in the passage from the *Rhetoric*, as Aristotle is aware that intricate sentences are equally hard to understand just by hearing. But when we consider this problem in addition to the difficulty of deciphering manuscripts, it becomes clear that ancient philosophers saw many text-centered problems in the practice of reading, which was apparently enough for them to dismiss literacy as an efficient technology for disseminating information.

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12 *Sophistical Refutations*, 177b1–7 et 177b35–178a3.
13 Porphyry, *The Life of Plotinus*, VIII, trans. Armstrong.
14 Strabo, XIII, 1, 54.
15 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1407b13–16 trans. Freese.
16 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 275d, trans. Nehamas/Woodruff.

Yet, if literacy implies that someone actually reads the text, the situation gets worse when philosophers turn their attention to the readers, whose reading skills vary. No mechanism guarantees that the reader understands the very core of the text, and since the right comprehension of the text is not necessarily the main issue in a definition of a good reader, it becomes very difficult to determine whether one is a good or a bad reader. For example, Plato defines the good reader as someone who reads quickly,[17] a criterion that does not take into account the quality of the reader's comprehension and suggests that reading is merely a technical knowledge. He therefore seems to remain blind to the fact that not all readers understand what they read. An anecdote from Eunapius illustrates this situation: not everyone who read the works of Plotinus fully understood them. "Nay, even great numbers of the vulgar herd, though they in part fail to understand his doctrines, are swayed by them."[18] A philosopher's popularity does not guarantee that his followers are good readers. Moreover, as bad readers sometimes believe themselves to be erudite thanks to their reading—which seems to be the case in Eunapius' account—reading actually becomes an illusion of knowledge, which was Plato's main criticism against literacy.[19] A student who is not able to do better than repeat what he has read without understanding it cannot aspire to be a philosopher, and this is clear from condescending words addressed to rhapsodes[20] and to students repeating their lessons parrot-fashion.[21] Relying on reading in order to learn also invites the reader not to put effort into memorizing information. Why bother if it is available at any given time in the library? For Plato, a failure to memorize is a failure to learn.

Besides, be the reader good or bad—the latter usually being unaware that he is—there is no proof that what he reads actually conveys any truth. Nothing guarantees that the content of a text is reliable. The author, freed from the performative context and direct contact with his audience, can easily tell lies,[22] which proves disastrous when the reader lacks the

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[17] *Charmide*, 159c.

[18] Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, 455, trans. Wright. This passage from Eunapius may be understood better thanks to Bayard's theory of *non lecture* (Bayard [2007]). I thank Jeroen Lauwers for this suggestion.

[19] *Phaedrus*, 275a–b.

[20] See Plato's *Ion* and Xenophon's *Symposium*, 3, 5 and 4, 6.

[21] Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 33, 8–9.

[22] Segal (1992: 340).

judgement to question it. Moreover, the durability of a written text makes the use of reading inadequate in all situations where the information might become obsolete, which is the case for medical prescriptions[23] as well as philosophical prescriptions.[24]

As a means of transmitting information and learning, the reading of a text never guarantees that the reader gets any knowledge, either because of the material characteristics of the text or of the ignorance of the reader. This understanding of reading explains the mockery sometimes addressed to readers in ancient texts, as in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* IV, 2, where Socrates laughs at Euthydemos because he believes that he will be able to acquire political competence through books. In that particular text, moreover, the expertise Euthydemos is searching for is presented as practical knowledge, hence impossible to acquire exclusively from theory. To many ancient philosophers literacy as a technology of information appears to be a failure.

I.2. *Writing*

Things do not get much better when we consider the contents and the production of the written text itself. Writing is blamed for a lack of memorization on the student's part, as having a good memory, for many philosophers, is considered to be the basis of learning.[25] Now, what we cannot remember we have not actually learned: Plato's doctrine of reminiscence, as exposed in the *Meno*, implies that what we know corresponds to what we can remember. Aristotle also remarks that it is always a good thing to know the propositions that will be used in philosophical discussion by heart (ἀπὸ στόματος ἐξεπίστασθαι).[26] And what if our notes disappeared? It is tragic if the 'mind forgets', as Antisthenes remarks. "When a friend complained to him that he had lost his notes", Diogenes Laertius writes, "You should have inscribed them", he said, "on your mind instead of the paper."[27] In other words, a philosopher should never rely on written texts but on his own memory. This is even more important in the Stoics' account of the good life, as reliance on written material for happiness

[23] Plato, *Politics*, 295c–296e; 301a–301c.
[24] Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 24, 15.
[25] Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, 9, 11; Theophrast, *Characters*, XXVI, 2; Flavius Josephus, *Autobiography*, 7–8.
[26] *Topics*, 163b16–34.
[27] Diogenes Laertius, VI, 5, trans. Hicks.

is condemned for being material. "For as salutations and power are things external and independent of the will, so is a book."[28] A real philosopher does not have to write, because he memorizes.

Furthermore, someone who in his writings presents himself as a philosopher may not actually be one. Philosophy is not reducible to a certain number of lines read or written, which is quite clear in this passage from Arrian:

> Come, when you have done these things and have attended to them, have you done a worse act than when you have read a thousand verses or written as many? [...] Books? How or for what purpose? For is not this a preparation for life? And is not life itself made up of certain other things than this?[29]

And those who abundantly write unsorted thoughts and demonstrations are judged ridiculous and mocked, as Diogenes Laertius tells us: "If one were to strip the books of Chrysippus of all extraneous quotations, his pages would be left bare."[30] Philosophers seem to reject an account of philosophy as inseparable from writing.

I.3. *The Defence of Orality*

When compared to orality, literacy appears an even poorer means of communication. For the philosophers, friendship and learning are closely linked, as friendly discussion is needed if progress is to be made. Thus equality between the interlocutors is the key to productive discussion. Friendship and discussion are brought together in Plato's *Theaetetus*: "Theodorus", says Socrates, "I hope my love of argument is not making me forget my manners—just because I'm so anxious to start a discussion and get us all friendly and talkative together?"[31] The same is found in Aeschines of Sphettos' *Alcibiades*, where love and learning are intertwined in the relationship between Socrates and Alcibiades.

> "And I", Socrates utters, "though knowing no lesson through which I could benefit a man by teaching, nevertheless believed that by being together with this man I could make him better through love."[32]

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[28] Arrian, *Discourses*, IV, 4, trans. Long.

[29] Arrian, *Discourses*, IV, 4, trans. Long.

[30] Diogenes Laertius, VII, 180–181, trans. Hicks.

[31] Plato, *Theaetetus*, 146a, trans. Levett/Burnyeat.

[32] Aelius Aristides, *In Defense of Oratory*, 74 = Aeschines of Sphettus, 12, trans. Johnson. The proximity between lovers and philosophers is also expressed in Plotinus, I, 3, 1 and 3.

The same combination occurs in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* where Socrates freely teaches his friends[33] and has a sort of loving-learning relationship with Euthydemos,[34] similar to that described by Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium*.[35] The transmission of knowledge is made possible by the proximity between teacher and student. Sometimes this proximity is even understood as being physical, as in the *Theages*, an apocryphal dialogue attributed to Plato,[36] and as suggested by Agathon at the beginning of the *Symposium*;[37] the same idea also shows up in Chrysippus.[38] In this case, obviously, a book cannot convey knowledge. *Philia* links also permit the doxographs of later Antiquity to connect members of a given school, for instance Antisthenes and Crates.[39] Without love and honesty, learning is not possible, as is revealed by Socrates' discourse in the *Hipparchus*:

> Don't let me make you give in like that, as if you had been tricked by something; pay attention and answer as if I were asking again from the beginning. [...] Well then, don't try to deceive me—I'm already an old man and you're so very young—by answering as you did just now, saying what you yourself don't think; tell the truth.[40]

Also, for many Hellenistic philosophers, given the importance of action, discussion becomes the minimal test of the philosophical progress of the student, which is evident in Arrian and Lucian.[41]

The will to preserve *philia* is also expressed by the rejection of paid philosophical teaching found in Plato's works[42] as well as in those of Lucian[43] and Aristotle,[44] and more virulently in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, where sophists who receive money for their services are compared to prostitutes.

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[33] I, 2, 60 and II, 7, 1: "The distresses of his friends that arose from ignorance he tried to cure by advice, those that were due to want by *teaching* them how to help one another according to their power. (Καὶ μὴν τὰς ἀπορίας γε τῶν φίλων τὰς μὲν δι' ἄγνοιαν ἐπειρᾶτο γνώμῃ ἀκεῖσθαι, τὰς δὲ δι' ἔνδειαν *διδάσκων* κατὰ δύναμιν ἀλλήλοις ἐπαρκεῖ)", trans. Merchant, modified.

[34] IV, 2, 40.

[35] 222b.

[36] 130d–e.

[37] 175d–e.

[38] Origen, *Against Celsus*, IV, 48, 18–24. (Arnim 1903–1905: II, 1074). See Barra (2010).

[39] This relation is obvious in Lucian, *Dialogues of the dead*, XXII, but is also found, generally speaking, in Diogenes Laertius. See Goulet-Cazé (1986).

[40] Plato, *Hipparchus*, 225b–226a, trans. Smith.

[41] Arrian, *Discourses*, I, 4, 15–23; I, 10, 8; II, 4; II, 10; II, 21; Lucian, *Symposium*, 34.

[42] *Republic* 337c and 345e–347a; *Theaetetus* 161d–e.

[43] See *Hermotimos*, 80–82 and *Symposium*, 36.

[44] *Sophistical Refutations*, 165a21; 171b25–30; 183b35–38.

> For if someone wishes to sell his youthful bloom for money to whoever wishes it, they call him a prostitute; but if someone makes a friend of one whom he recognizes to be a lover who is both noble and good (a gentleman), we hold that he is moderate. Similarly, those also who sell wisdom for money to whoever wishes it they call sophists just as if they were prostitutes; but we hold that whoever makes a friend by teaching whatever good he possesses to someone he recognizes as having a good nature—this one does what befits a gentlemanly (noble and good) citizen.[45]

A sophist, just like a prostitute, is someone to whom one does not want to be related, and who thus becomes indebted to the customer whenever the service is not assured. When someone pays a sophist, he will require a refund if the expected knowledge is not acquired by the end of the lesson, an account of teaching which corresponds to the assertion of Protagoras that his students pay him what they judge his lesson was worth.[46] Wages were debated in the philosophical schools, as Stobaeus relates:

> they had a disagreement over the meaning of the term, some taking "practice as a sophist" to mean giving access to philosophical doctrines for fee, while others sensed something pejorative in the term, like trading in arguments.[47]

The opposition between wage-earning and *philia* suggests the impossibility of learning correctly outside the bonds of friendship. Hence, the book is rejected: being bought and sold, it cannot maintain the *philia*-relationship that only the traditional oral context succeeds in preserving. Besides, when the student has access to the real person, the reading of his books is considered as a waste of time, as is the case with the Cynic Diogenes.[48]

Orality is therefore viewed quite positively in the ancient philosophical tradition. It should be noticed, however, that philosophers were aware of the limits of orality when it came to transmitting information over time. Aristotle doubts that the oral tradition could preserve every scientific discovery,[49] and Eunapius suggests that an oral tradition is susceptible of being corrupted through time.[50]

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[45] Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, I, 6, 13, trans. Bonnette.

[46] Plato, *Protagoras*, 328b.

[47] Stobaeus II, 109, 10–110, 4 (Long and Sedley, 67W).

[48] Diogenes Laertius, VI, 48.

[49] *Metaphysics* Λ, 1074b5–10; see also *Politics*, 1329b25–30.

[50] Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, 460. Nevertheless, Eunapius relies on the oral tradition for the redaction of his book, so he might judge it somewhat trustworthy; see 491.

I.4. *The Criticism of Literacy: Conclusion*

The analysis of the ancient philosophers' criticism of literacy shows that, in their view, philosophical knowledge is best conveyed by oral technologies. On one hand, reading undecipherable, ambiguous or wrong statements might lead to mislearning. Moreover, books are sometimes used for purposes that have nothing to do with their contents but are rather dependent on their materiality. On the other hand, writing is blamed for intellectual laziness and the neglect of real-life application of philosophical knowledge. Then again, pro-orality arguments show that philosophical learning implies a close relationship among equals in order to guarantee its validity through discussion and reciprocity, which is simply impossible with a book. We would thus expect the philosophers to refrain from using literacy, in accordance with their opinion. The very fact that our only sources for the philosophers' negative opinion concerning books have come down in written form thus appears as a striking anomaly that needs further exploration.

II. *The Practice of Literacy*

When we study the way philosophers describe themselves, we find the practice of reading to be quite extensive rather than restricted: Aristotle's nickname was "the reader",[51] and Plato himself shows philosophers reading in his dialogues[52] and uses the term "illiterate" (ἀγράμματον) to describe ignorant people;[53] later evidence from Lucian and Diogenes Laertius even suggests that books were considered to be part of the attributes of the philosophers.[54] But the mere practice of literacy is not necessarily inconsistent with the criticisms discussed above, as the philosophers struggle to mould their practice after their views. Hence I will examine their practices of reading, writing, and orality, in order to understand better how these practices can be consistent with their criticism.

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[51] *Vita Marciana*, 6.

[52] *Gorgias*, 462b–c; *Sophist*, 232d–e; *Theaetetus*, 152a; *Phaedo*, 97b–c.

[53] *Critias*, 109d; see also *Timaeus*, 23a–b.

[54] Lucian, *The Dead Come to Life* or *The Fisherman*, 45. See also *Philosophies for Sale* (*Sale of Creeds*), IX; *Hermotimos*, 1. The same idea can be found in Diogenes Laertius, I, 43.

II.1. *Reading*

Being blamed, as we just saw, for its incapacity to transmit knowledge, reading is still often depicted as a social activity. For instance, Xenophon presents Socrates reading along with his friends.

> And reading collectively with my friends, I go through the treasures of the wise men of old which they wrote and left behind in their books; and if we see something good, we pick it out; and we hold that it is a great gain if we become friends with one another.[55]

In Plato, group reading turns out to be a pretext for a philosophical exchange, as we can see in the *Parmenides*, with Zeno's lecture instigating the whole dialogue.[56] The same happens in the *Phaedrus* with the reading of Lysias' discourse, and in the *Theaetetus* where Eucleides asks a slave to read aloud, for him and his friend Terpsion, a dialogue that he had taken note of. An exhortation to reading as a group is also found in an apocryphal letter ascribed to Plato.[57] In general, the connection between reading and discussion seems widespread in later periods of Greek Antiquity as well, for Aulus Gellius also mentions in the preface to his *Attic Nights* that someone who cannot converse correctly should not read, and Diogenes Laertius tells his readers that Plato, just like Aristotle, read his dialogues aloud to his students.[58] Arrian also relates progress to discussion, as shown in the *Discourses*:

> ... yet the question whether we are going to have a moral purpose characterized by self respect and good faith, or by shamelessness and bad faith, does not so much as begin to disturb us, except only in so far as we make it a topic of trivial discussion in the classroom. Therefore, so far as our trivial discussions go, we do make some progress, but, apart from them, not even the very least.[59]

Group readings also allows the teacher to follow each student's progression[60] and to make sure that the latter does not read texts that he will not be able to understand.[61]

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[55] Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, I, 6, 14, trans. Bonnette.
[56] 127c–d.
[57] *Letter VI*, 323c.
[58] III, 35; 37.
[59] Arrian, *Discourses*, II, 10, trans. Oldfather.
[60] Marinus of Neapolis, *Proclus*, 12–13; Arrian, *Discourses*, I, 26, 13–18.
[61] Julian, *To the Cynic Heracleios*, 23.

The mechanism assuring the validity of learning is then maintained by the joint study of written material, which restrains, if not eliminates, the difficulties of reaching a correct understanding of the text because of the hermetic character of writing. Written texts are subordinate to a discussion that becomes a test where the participants verify each other's acquisition of the knowledge contained within the text, as well as the veracity of that knowledge. Reading in a group, as opposed to solitary reading, permits the learning of useful things, because it allows for a valuable examination of both the text and the reader.[62] Every participant is responsible for the group's comprehension of the reading. This practice also grounds the use of literacy in orality, and consequently maintains discussion and fosters friendship. Reading will be replaced as soon as possible by the live lessons of a competent teacher, but can be used in the meanwhile to transmit discourse through time and space,[63] since some authors stress the importance of knowing the written works of their predecessors.[64] Hellenistic philosophers thus recommend that advanced students read the writings of the ancient sages, since reading is legitimate for those who have already shown their ability to understand philosophical works.[65] However, readers have to be chosen with care[66] as the correct practice of reading is restricted to those who already know,[67] and it is considered better if they go through the text together.[68] Hence the practice of reading is accepted insofar as it constitutes a mimesis of an oral context.

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[62] Xenophon, *Memorabilia* I, 6, 14; Plato, *Parmenides*, 127c–d; Pseudo-Plato, *Letter XII*; Arrian, *Discourses*, I, 25, 6.

[63] Plato, *Critias*, 23a–b.

[64] Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, IX, 4; Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, XIV. Aristotle's habit of examining the theses of his predecessors at the beginning of his treatises should also be pointed out, see, e.g., *De Interpretatione*, 19b30; 20b25–26; *Posterior Analytics*, 71a29; 91b13; *Eudemian Ethics* 1217a16–17; 1222b38–39; 1227a11; 1228a23–25; *Poetics*, 1454b17–18; *Politics*, 1262b10–13; 1280a17; 1316a5–7; 1341b30–32; *Topics*, 162a10; 162b32; *Sophistical Refutations*, 165b10; 173a8; 174b27; *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1139b27; 1139b32, etc. Many more examples can be found in the *Metaphysics* and the *Politics*. Although this use of writing is not made explicit in Plato, it should be noticed that the narrative settings of some dialogues are temporally connected with one another. The *Politics* (257a, 258b, 284b, 286b) refers to the *Sophist* as its sequel. The *Timaeus* (27a) suggests that *Critias* should come next, and recapitulates the *Republic* (17b–19b). The *Sophist* (217c) refers to the *Parmenides* and to the *Theaeteteus* (216a), while the *Theaeteteus* (183e) itself refers to the *Parmenides*.

[65] Arrian, *Discourses*, I, 20, 14–19; I, 25, 6.

[66] Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, IV; Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, XX, 5.

[67] Arrian, *Discourses*, I, 26, 18; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, V, 9, 58, 2 (Long and Sedley 67E); Plotinus, III, 7, 13; Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*, VII, 9.

[68] Pseudo-Plato, *Letter VI*, 323c.

II.2. *Writing*

With regard to writing, ancient philosophers mostly discuss its use for specific functions which are not possible with oral technologies.[69] One may think of the possibility of communication through time and space; of memoranda; of inscriptions in a public space; and, of course, of the possibility of making lists and classifications. All these possibilities realized by the material nature of writing led Aristotle to a very personal account of literacy, which I will examine briefly, as his appears to be a dissident voice in an otherwise rather homogeneous group.

The passage from Xenophon about reading collectively, which I quoted above, suggests that writing could be used to converse with wise people beyond the grave.[70] Even though this does not imply that the 'wise men of old' wrote for that purpose, it seems very plausible that Xenophon understood his own writing in that respect, for the end of the *Cynegeticus* contains a long development devoted to the difference between his own writing and those of the sophists, in which he describes his own work as useful for posterity.[71] Xenophon is not alone, since Plotinus also considered that the ancients wrote in order to be useful to posterity.[72] Similarly, even if most of the letters we have from Antiquity are apocryphal or questionable,[73] they testify to the fact that literacy was used to transmit knowledge through space: think here not only of Plato, but also of Seneca, Epicurus, and Diogenes, for example. These letters do not simply contain news sent to friends; they have public and philosophical content that is thought to be useful for generations to come.[74]

The use of writing for memoranda is more difficult to confine to the criticisms of writing, given that it was proposed as the cause for the failure to memorize and intellectual laziness. But, when we view it more closely, we find this practice is strictly framed, and used only to memorize things that are already known or to add precision to what has been remembered. In this respect, some philosophers say that their written work is meant as

[69] As has been widely studied in the last thirty years: Stubbs (1980), Goody (1979), Ong (2002).
[70] *Memorabilia*, I, 6, 14.
[71] XIII, 1–12, and particularly XIII, 6.
[72] Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, XX.
[73] See Wes (1972).
[74] Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 22, 2. Seneca further refers to a letter from Epicurus, thus showing in practice what he mentions in theory. See 22, 5.

a testimony to their master's teaching or to their own teaching and is then intended for their students and friends. Philosophers produce texts that are commissioned to make a lively impression and that copy the master's way of being and speaking, or that of the friend whom they present in their work.[75] For instance, Arrian makes this desire explicit in the *Letter to Lucius Gellius* which prefaces the *Discourses*:

> I have not composed these *Words of Epictetus* as one might be said to "compose" books of this kind, nor have I of my own act published them to the world; indeed I acknowledge that I have not "composed" them at all. But whatever I heard him say I used to write down, word for word, as best I could, endeavouring to preserve it as a memorial, for my own future use, of his way of thinking and the frankness of his speech.[76]

The same desire is implicit in the title of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. Here, *Ἀπομνημονευμάτων* clearly refers to memory, and even if the title may not be Xenophon's own, he mentions that he tried to describe Socrates "as he was" (τοιοῦτος ὢν οἷον ἐγὼ διήγημαι),[77] which indicates that Arrian's attempt is similar to that of Xenophon. Similarly, in the beginning of Plato's *Theaetetus*, Eucleides confesses to have made notes of a dialogue *in which he was instructed to insure he correctly noted every single passage*.[78] One must admit that the philosophers themselves could write to insure that they would not be forgotten, as was the case with Plato's work, according to Diogenes Laertius.[79] This view is better understood if we consider that the ancient philosophers saw written texts as the dependants of their authors, hence representing them in their absence.[80] Thus the use of memoranda presupposes that the writer already possesses some knowledge of what he is writing, and that in many cases the style is just as important as the content.

In its material form, literacy also brings the legal and political inscription of knowledge into the public space. Theoretically, written laws can be consulted by everybody, which promises to put an end to inconsistent application of the rules, given that all parties are able to verify them.[81] To this effect citizens do not actually have to read the law, and written laws do

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75 Cicero, *Laelius*, I, 5.
76 Arrian, *To Lucius Gellius*, trans. Oldfather.
77 Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, IV, 8, 11; see also I, 3, 1.
78 *Theaetetus*, 143a–c.
79 III, 40.
80 Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 40, 1; Plato, *Phaedrus*, 228e.
81 Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution*, XI, 1.

not imply a high degree of literacy in the citizen.[82] As Detienne puts it, the laws are meant to be seen rather than read:[83] they are efficient because of their materiality. That use of writing can be noticed in Plato's *Laws*, where it is emphasized that laws should be written and displayed to assure the judges' integrity;[84] similar arguments can also be found in the *Critias*.[85] Xenophon defines law as what the people have written (ἔγραψε),[86] thus showing a close relationship between the use of writing and the public space. In Diogenes Laertius Antisthenes and Diogenes are both shown using written signs for the purposes of making an accusation, wearing them around their necks.[87] Both these anecdotes illustrate that philosophers assumed that writing had an efficacy in the public space that an oral utterance had not, and used it for that purpose.

Literacy also makes lists possible, which makes only little sense in an oral context. This is not to say, however, that people in oral societies cannot understand classifications, but that the support of the written word makes this intellectual operation easier.[88] Lists presuppose a capacity for classifying terms according to a given criterion, hence requiring previous knowledge of the subject. In Xenophon's *Memorabilia* IV, 2, Socrates questions Euthydemos about justice, and asks him to sort fair and unfair actions. When the same action is put in both categories, Euthydemos obviously contradicts himself, which could have escaped notice in an oral context. Through the written word his ignorance of justice becomes evident. Rectifying one's words, which characterizes oral technologies, is here a proof of ignorance; but Socrates' aim would be unattainable if Euthydemos could perpetually amend his position. Xenophon testifies to the efficacy of written lists for the purpose of refutation and their lack of value when it comes to define the nature of justice,[89] since mere writing

[82] Even the practice of ostracism does not imply a massive literacy of the citizen. Plutarch shows in a rather comic way that it was always possible for an illiterate person to ask someone else to write on the *ostracon*. Plutarch, *Life of Aristides*, VII, 6. See Harvey (1966: 591) and Havelock (1982: 101–102).

[83] As cited by Camassa (1992: 151).

[84] XI, 917e–918a.

[85] 119c–120b.

[86] *Memorabilia*, I, 2, 42; IV, 4, 13.

[87] VI, 33 and 89.

[88] Veyne (1983: 17–23); Zajko (1995: 21–22); Goody (2007: 207) and (1979: 105–106).

[89] Johnson (2005: 53) believes that Xenophon rejects in this passage any relation between the use of literacy and the definition of justice. However, in the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon defines justice as the law (IV, 4, 13) and the law as what the *demos* has written down (ἔγραψε), which contradicts Johnson's analysis: see I, 2, 42.

cannot supply the deficiency of previous knowledge when lists clash. As I understand this passage, a concession is made to literacy as far as it can serve didactic purpose, but in Xenophon's opinion it fails to create new knowledge. Aristotle's use of lists is a bit different from Xenophon's, since the list that we can observe in the *Eudemian Ethics* seems to be used to create new knowledge, which is presented as a table in the manuscripts:[90]

ὀργιλότης	ἀναλγησία	πραότης.
θρασύτης	δειλία	ἀνδρεία.
ἀναισχυντία	κατάπληξις	αἰδώς.
ἀκολασία	ἀναισθησία	σωφροσύνη.
φθόνος	ἀνώνυμον	νέμεσις.
κέρδος	ζημία	δίκαιον.
ἀσωτία	ἀνελευθερία	ἐλευθεριότης.
ἀλαζονεία	εἰρωνεία	ἀλήθεια.
κολακεία	ἀπέχθεια	φιλία.
ἀρέσκεια	αὐθάδεια	σεμνότης.
[τρυφερότης	κακοπάθεια	καρτερία.]
χαυνότης	μικροψυχία	μεγαλοψυχία.
δαπανηρία	μικροπρέπεια	μεγαλοπρέπεια.
[πανουργία	εὐήθεια	φρόνησις].

If, as some scholars have suggested, the third column is an interpolation, then the two first terms are sufficient for the student to find out the third one, which is the corresponding virtue. It is also difficult to know whether this list corresponds to the table (*hupographês*) mentioned in the *Eudemian Ethics* as well as in the similar passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[91] However, this list suggests that the use of lists in a didactic perspective was not restricted to showing one the limits of one's knowledge as is the case in Xenophon, but it could also contribute to the development of new knowledge. Graphic representations were thus also considered useful for teaching purposes. It is probable that this use of visual support was more extensive in other disciplines such as geography.[92]

These considerations suggest that we have a dissident philosopher in Aristotle, in that he claims that a written work is also the first step to the construction of new knowledge. As long as a discipline is not written, it cannot progress,[93] since a written text allows scientists to stop repeating

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[90] 1220b36–1221a12.
[91] 1107ab30.
[92] Jacob (1992).
[93] Cf. *On Sophistical Refutations* 184a*sq*.

the same material, thereby permitting the construction of new learning built on a common basis. Aristotle is convinced that the same data are time and again rediscovered over time.[94] Besides, he invites his students to write down notes in order to keep track of their reading:

> One should also collect premisses from written works, and make up tables, listing them separately about each genus, e.g. about good or about animal (and about every [sense of] good), beginning with what it is. One should also make marginal notes on the opinions of particular people, e.g. that it was Empedocles who said that there are four elements of bodies (for someone might concede what was said by a famous person).[95]

In this respect, Aristotle should be considered separately from other philosophers even though we have seen that he shares some criticism of writing with his contemporaries and encourages students to learn by heart what they take note of. It would be fair to state that the use of literacy in the philosophers did not follow a constant curve, and that Aristotle's practice of reading and writing does not stand out as a breaking point in the history of literacy, since almost no philosopher outside the Peripatetic circles followed his example. Indeed, doctrinal peculiarities should be taken into account when it comes to assessing the use of literacy. Another example is that of the Sceptical school, where literacy was criticized, insofar as it was not compatible with the suspension of judgement,[96] but the same criticisms could be applied to any utterance, be it oral or written. Whereas the Sceptics' use of literacy, although otherwise explained, remains similar to the general tendencies of their contemporaries, Aristotle, on the other hand, shows us a novel, and original, use for literacy.

II.3. *The Practice of Orality*

Although it is of course impossible to observe the philosophers' practice of orality, we should still point out the popularity of the dialogue and the symposium as literary genres, which can easily be observed in Plato or Xenophon as well as Plutarch or Athenaeus. This demonstrates at least that the taste for oral-grounded texts is maintained through Antiquity.

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[94] *Metaphysics* Λ, 1074b5–10. Similarly in the *Politics*, 1329b25–30.

[95] *Topics*, 105b12–18, trans. Smith.

[96] Diogenes Laërtius, IV, 31–32. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Preparation for the Gospels*, XIV, 18, 1–5.

Besides, several of these works, if not all, in fact show philosophers performing and receiving oral teaching.

In addition, we notice many references to the oral Homeric tradition in the philosophical works of Antiquity,[97] and this omnipresence leads us to think that the philosophers were attached to the stories inherited from the oral tradition. The popularity of rhapsodic contests even in later Antiquity might be a sign that the preference for oral narration did last, and not only in philosophical circles.[98] There is evidence for similar representations of philosophical recitations in Athenaeus, who mentions that Cleomenes brought the works of Empedocles into the theatre.[99] We even see Plato calling upon an oral narration in the *Timaeus*.[100] Besides, many philosophical works imitate the formulaic style and other features of the Homeric epics and other oral narrations. For example, the similarities between the fragments from Parmenides' poem and the epics have been studied by Havelock (1958), and a similar comparison can be made with Lucretius' *On the Nature of Things*.[101]

Finally, I should point out that the use of literacy seems to have been restricted in some philosophical schools: Aulus Gellius testifies to the importance of listening in the Pythagorean circles, where the students were expected to remain silent for their first two years in the school.[102] It has also been suggested that a part of philosophical teaching was confined to oral lessons—there is evidence for this in Marinus[103]—and that there was a difference between esoteric and exoteric work.[104] However, these terms are ambiguous since it is possible that esoteric lessons concern exoteric contents and vice versa.[105] It should also be pointed out that

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[97] See Havelock on Parmenides (1958) and Plato (1953), or Labarbe (1949) on Plato and Xenophon.

[98] Lentz (1989: 42), citing Enos (1978: 142).

[99] 620c.

[100] 20d–e.

[101] See the addresses to Venus and the Muses and other references to the epic tradition notably in I, 1–43; I, 124; I, 945–947; VI, 92–95. The poem also contains many references to the semantic field of audition and the ear (I, 50; 410–417; 921; III, 135; IV, 115; 880; 912; VI, 536) and grounds philosophy in the oral tradition through comparisons and metaphors relative to that semantic field. See I, 643; 657; 732; III, 14.

[102] *Attics Nights*, I, 9. The question of silence remains a blind spot in orality studies and should be explored in the near future, as Pietro Liuzzo has pointed out.

[103] Marinus of Neapolis, *Proclus*, 22.

[104] Esoteric works are then considered as part of an oral teaching, while exoteric teaching would correspond to the written texts. See Richard (2005).

[105] Bodéüs (1982: 165–167).

these words are completely absent from the Platonic corpus as well, and that in the ancient works where they appear they are defined differently depending on their contexts.[106] It is then difficult to use them as a basis for understanding the practice of orality and literacy in the philosophers, because it is impossible to know whether they correspond to these notions or not. Nevertheless, it should be noted that there is evidence for commentaries based on oral teaching in Late Antiquity, and their oral origin is known, for it is specified in their titles with the expression "apo phônês".[107] Last but not least, we know of a few philosophers who did not write at all, of whom Socrates and Epictetus are the most obvious, but not the only, examples.[108]

Even though the ancient philosophers' practice of orality is not possible to observe, these remarks show that even though we only know it by means of literacy, their preference for the oral tradition is widely represented in their works.

II.4. *Conclusion of the Practice of Literacy*

The practice of literacy as depicted by the ancient philosophers, like their criticism of it, changes as they transfer their consideration from reading to writing. Reading tends to imitate orality, while writing is mostly used for specific functions that are not possible in an oral context, and orality shows up in many works as a preferred technology of information. Literacy gains popularity for its originality rather than for replacing orality, which suggests that the "dynamic tension" between orality and literacy that Havelock observed in earlier Antiquity should be considered over a much longer period of time, and possibly throughout Antiquity.

This study of the practice of literacy in the ancient philosophical texts leads to two major statements. First, broadly speaking, the philosophers' criticism of literacy is reflected in their practice, as every practice of reading and writing is carefully organized to avoid the problems that

[106] Philopon, *in Cat.*, *CAG*, XIII 1, 3.14–16; Simplicius, *in Cat.*, *CAG*, VIII, 4.10 *sq.*; Ammonios, *in Cat.*, *CAG*, IV 4, 4.21–27; Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, XX 5; Cicero, *Letter to Atticus*, IV, 16, 2; *De Finibus*, V, 5, 12. See also Bos (1989) and Bodéüs (1982). It is not certain whether these notions should be connected to the acroatic and epoptic lessons of Aristotle described by Plutarch in the *Life of Alexander*, VII, 5.

[107] Richard (1950).

[108] Eunapius, in the *Lives of the Philosophers*, 460, mentions that Alypios did not write at all and taught only orally. According to Diogenes Laertius (IV, 65) Carneades did not leave any work.

philosophers identify with the use of literacy. Second, this consistency may mean that we are faced with a romanticized account of the philosophers' practice. In their own works, philosophers are 'performing', and they may have actually read books alone or written essays in order to create new knowledge, and the proximity between the philosophers and their books is widely testified from non-philosophical authorities.[109] Despite this, the avoidance of putting emphasis on works that focus on literacy in the constitution of the corpus should help us consider this account of the practice of literacy as broadly correct, although obviously limited to the perception philosophers had of themselves and not grounded on *realia* that prove impossible to verify.

III. *Conclusion*

In sum, the critique which philosophers make with regard to reading and writing is reflected in their practice, and the use of literacy is not necessarily a contradiction in terms to a critical account of it. Reading is presented as a social practice that allows the reader to imitate friendship with an author while sharing his thoughts with friends. In that sense, reading aloud in groups is a way of imitating orality and of grounding the use of literacy in friendship and discussion. It makes it possible to reduce the hermetic character of the text, and to confirm the knowledge of the participant as well as the veracity of the text. In practice just as in theory, reading is denied the virtue of replacing real live instruction if it is not grounded in an oral context.

Then again, the practice of writing remains dependent upon knowledge, and does not compete with the use of oral technologies as long as writing is used for specific purposes. As a means of communicating through time and space—in which case we come back to reading in groups—, as memoranda or as a way to save time for new knowledge construction, the use of writing presupposes that the writer already knows what he is writing about. It is the same for lists. Regarding inscription in the public space, we should think of the written text more as a material object than as an intellectual object, which makes it radically different from orality. Law, for instance, is meant to be seen, not *per se* read, and for that purpose written texts reveal a greater efficacy than is possible for an oral tradition.

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[109] Think of comedy, for example Anaxippus I, 21; Alexis, fr. 1.

The broad-perspective project, of which this article presents some highlights, also shows that, in opposition to the mainstream thesis, the criticism of, along with the practice of, literacy should be understood as a cultural continuity that lasted for a longer time than is usually assumed. The least I could say is that the practice of literacy remained tentative for a long time, and thus we should probably stop seeing Plato as the last representative of a lost oral society,[110] since his condemnation of literacy was still approved in most philosophical circles, and probably most intellectual circles, in Late Antiquity. In that respect, we have to dismiss an account of Plato that would neglect his similarity with other ancient philosophers. When compared with Aristotle, who stands for the use of literacy as a means of developing knowledge, Plato's originality is, in a broader view, overrated; originality should rather be attributed to Aristotle. Nevertheless, be it Aristotle's influence or the growing popularity of written technologies, philosophers become less and less reluctant to use them. I would not be honest if I said that we find the exact same criticism of and practice of literacy throughout Antiquity, since we observe variations and particularities linked to philosophical doctrines, as we have seen in the case of Aristotle, also in the case of the Sceptical school.

The study of the criticism as well as the practice of orality and literacy in such a broad period shows that the terms 'invention of literature'[111] or 'invention of the literary author',[112] usually employed to account for the literacy of Plato or Isocrates do not correspond to the infinite slowness of a mutation that is quite restricted. Our perception of living in a 'book culture', if broadly correct, still largely neglects oral elements that have been studied in the last decade or two, such as television soap operas,[113] or even the thesis defense.[114] In spite of the commitment to writing a record of the Homeric poems in the Hellenistic period and, later, in spite of the emergence of a book-centred religion, and notwithstanding the evident use of literacy, the ancient philosophical tradition testifies to a refusal, both theoretical and practical, to discard orality. It is possible then that written technologies cannot definitely do away with the oral tradition.

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110 This was the hypothesis of Havelock (1963).
111 Dupont (1990).
112 Lentz (1989).
113 Dupont (1990).
114 Clark (2007).

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READING BOOKS, TALKING CULTURE: THE PERFORMANCE OF *PAIDEIA* IN IMPERIAL GREEK LITERATURE[*]

Jeroen Lauwers

Abstract

This paper highlights some tendencies in Imperial Greek literature which are intertwined with the transfer from book reading to the reproduction of knowledge. It is argued that the tense competition for the title of *pepaideumenos* probably motivated the popular sophists of this age to develop a functional way of dealing with literature and culture, which quite self-evidently led to processes of canonization and epitomization. In conclusion, these dynamics of the oral performance of literature and culture might invite us to reconsider the place of literature in Imperial Greece, the influence of the oral performative climate on other sorts of literature and the function of Second Sophistic oratory against its wider social backdrop.

In 1976, when scholarly interest in Imperial Greek literature started to stage a resurgence, Graham Anderson published an article concerning Lucian's short cuts to literature, in which he argued that Lucian's knowledge of classical literature may have been overestimated as a result of his cunning coping strategies in citing from and referring to his classics. Some may even still recall Anderson's witty yet merciless conclusion to the article: "Lucian was an effortless humorist, and his quotation habits are those of a travelling sophist; as far as learning is concerned, he travelled light."[1] All in all, this judgement was considered too negative and quite unfair to Lucian, and much subsequent research on this author, as well as on many authors of this era, has shown that the representatives of the so-called Second Sophistic did in fact know a large amount of literature and developed a very versatile dialogue with the authorities of the past.[2]

[*] I would like to thank the participants to the 2010 Orality and Literacy conference in Canberra for their much appreciated remarks on this paper, and especially Thomas Köntges for his *Gründlichkeit* and Christopher Ransom for his many astute observations. Closer to home, Luc Van der Stockt is thanked for his comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

[1] Anderson (1976: 67).

[2] Besides many good articles, see especially the general monographs by Anderson

These recent scholarly tendencies, however, may in turn have disguised a facet of Second Sophistic dealings with literature that has not been sufficiently recognized. After all, there remains an element of truth in Anderson's observations that the literature to which Lucian and, by extension, many other authors from this period refer is often restricted to the same passages and images from the same canonized sources. The obvious discrepancy between Anderson's negative assumptions concerning Lucian's education and the modern appreciation of the sophists' energetic and multi-layered interaction with the past invites us to revisit the dynamics of *paideia* in Imperial Greek speech delivery, which is generally believed to have thoroughly influenced the literature of this age.

In order to reach a reconciliatory position, I suggest that we focus on the transfer from book reading to the performance of *paideia*. After all, reading a book, and, more conspicuously, *having read* a book, is a much more problematic matter than we tend to think. In exploring the complexities of reading books and talking about books (an interesting mix of orality and literacy), we might soon encounter a large no-man's land between the two opposite poles of 'knowing a book', that is, knowing it by heart along with its entire socio-cultural background, and not knowing *anything* about it at all. Much modern debate concerning the question how much an author has read arises, I think, from an imprecise convention over what 'having read something' actually means. One of the consequences of a narrow conception of reading is that only little attention is paid to the actual function which books fulfill in a society. Precisely this function of literature as a part of a wider socio-cultural system is what I would like to discuss in the present contribution.[3]

In the course of this discussion, I will embrace the social and performative character of education and book reading rather than cursing it, as Anderson did in his article on Lucian. From this basis, I hope to reveal 1) how some of the techniques which the Second Sophistic orators use are partly inspired by the inevitable dynamics of book reading and talking about books; 2) how their use of quotations and references probably tells us less about (the limitations of) their *paideia* than about their wider social and performative context; and therefore 3) how we scholars

(1993), Swain (1996), Schmitz (1997) and Whitmarsh (2001) and (2005). For playful allusivity and other aspects of the ancient Greek novel, see the recent contributions in Whitmarsh (2008).

[3] For the sociology of reading in Antiquity in general, see Johnson (2000).

can appreciate their creative and versatile interactions with traditional sources and yet fully assess the consequences of the performative context for which these discourses were designed or by which they were influenced.

For the discussion of the practice of reading books and talking about books, I use some concepts and ideas from the bestselling essay by the French literary critic Pierre Bayard, *How to Talk about Books You Haven't Read*. These concepts are *not* introduced to portray the Second Sophistic sophists as empty-headed hypocrites who have never read a book in their lives and yet claim to know it all, for quite the opposite is true. These men were no doubt very well educated, had access to a great number of books and devoted a large amount of their time to classical literature. Pierre Bayard's essay is discussed here because it offers a deconstruction of the idea that knowledge of literature *only* stems from a personal acquaintance with all literary works.[4] Some literary theories have already defined reading and literature as a socio-cultural *praxis*,[5] but many of the direct consequences of such a viewpoint often remain unexpressed, probably because it questions the very status of the so-called literary *connoisseur*.

As a final preliminary remark, I wish to point out that two of the ancient sources which I use in the subsequent text are not directly situated in the culture of the Second Sophistic. The first is Aulus Gellius, who must be placed in a Roman rather than a Greek context, but who nonetheless appears to represent the general approaches to literature and culture among the elites of the Roman Empire fairly well. The fourth-century schoolteacher Libanius can be positioned in a Greek context, but somewhat later than the cultural environment of the Second Sophistic. Libanius' teaching practice, however, seems to be in accordance with the rhetorical curriculum of the first and second centuries AD, so that his testimonies still offer valuable information about the social and performative dynamics of speech delivery in the era before his own.

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[4] Cf. Bayard (2007: 118): "It should be the most normal of behaviors to acknowledge that we haven't read a book while nevertheless reserving the right to pass judgment on it. If we rarely see this practice in action, it is because acknowledging our non-reading (which, as we have seen, may be quite active rather than passive) is, in our culture, deeply and ineradicably marked by guilt."

[5] See, e.g., the systemic approach of Even-Zohar's polysystem study (in Even-Zohar [1990]), with some literary implications in De Geest (2003).

I. *Reading, Forgetting, Solutions*

As Bayard points out, even the best trained literary minds suffer from the uncomfortable feeling that human beings forget what they have read. Furthermore, from a performative angle, a person who has read a work but has forgotten it faces the same problems as someone who has not read it at all. More provocatively, one may ask oneself if the actual practice of reading is not irrelevant as soon as one makes a book into a performance by talking about it.[6]

We must obviously not underestimate the capacity of cultivated people in the Roman Empire to memorize huge chunks of literature,[7] a talent developed at every stage of ancient education.[8] However, the fact remains that ancient authors and readers were also confronted with the inevitable problem of forgetting the texts they read or listened to. Aulus Gellius, a second-century collector of *memorabilia*, informs us in the introduction to his *Attic Nights* that he put together all these bits and pieces so that he could "lay them away as an aid to [his] memory, like a kind of literary storehouse, so that when the need arose of a word or a subject which [he] chanced to have forgotten, and the books which [he] had taken were not at hand, [he] could readily find and produce it."[9] Gellius' condition seems to have been shared by his contemporaries. Plutarch of Chaeronea also appears to have made use of *hypomnēmata* for the composition of his treatises, as has been evidenced by systematic research into recurring clusters of themes and references throughout his *œuvre*.[10] Both cases testify to the ancient authors' apparent need to aid their memory, so that we may conclude that even though they

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[6] Bayard (2007: 48): "When we are talking about books, then, to ourselves and to others, it would be more accurate to say that we are talking about our approximate recollections of books, rearranged as a function of current circumstances."

[7] One of the most significant examples was probably Seneca the Elder, who told of himself that in his youth he was able to repeat two thousand names in the exact same order and more than two hundred verses of poetry in reverse order. See Sen. Mai., *Contr.* 1. Pr. 2.

[8] See especially Morgan (1998: *passim*).

[9] Gell., *NA*, Praefatio § 2: "(...) eaque mihi ad subsidium memoriae quasi quoddam litterarum penus recondebam, ut quando usus venisset aut rei aut verbi, cuius me repens forte oblivio tenuisset, et libri ex quibus ea sumpseram non adessent, facile inde nobis inuentu atque depromptu foret" (translation: J.C. Rolfe).

[10] For Plutarch's own allusion to his notes, see Plut., *De Tranq. An.*, 464F. For the studies of clusters in Plutarch, see, most conspicuously, Van der Stockt (1999).

have read a huge amount of literature, they were not necessarily able to reproduce their full range of literary knowledge at each and every moment.

Fortunately, the process of forgetting could also be countered through the consultation of private or public books. Home libraries were very expensive but, for the intellectuals of this age, the purchase of a large number of books for personal use seemed quite affordable.[11] Thanks to a recent discovery of a text in which Galen complains about the loss of his private library due to a fire, we get an idea of the amazing quantity of books he possessed, and we can only assume that he would not have been the only intellectual with such an extensive library.[12] Moreover, as a result of the construction of large public libraries by the Roman emperors and officials in the Imperial cities, books which were not in a person's home library could also be consulted if any need for that was felt.[13]

II. *Culture and Performance*

It is thus certainly not the case that the Second Sophistic orators were unable to consult their classics firsthand. Recent research in Second Sophistic declamation and literature,[14] however, has revealed that *paideia* is the domain not only of quiet students leaning over ancient books and silently absorbing their wisdom, but it is the arena also of self-conscious rhetorical virtuosos who displayed their abundant knowledge of traditional history and literature in front of large audiences. The author Philostratus reports in his *Vitae Sophistarum* that there was a great rivalry between the virtuoso speakers, who performed before critical audiences under the tremendous pressure of possibly being unmasked as babblers lacking a proper education.[15] Such a tense atmosphere implied that a *pepaideumenos* always had to have his cultural learning at his disposal,

[11] For bookshops in Rome, see White (2009).

[12] See Nutton (2009).

[13] A good general discussions on this topic is offered by Casson (2001: esp. 80–123). For the link between libraries, power and *paideia*, see Neudecker (2004). In Plut., *Dem.* 2, 1, it is pointed out that a learned man composing a history better lives in a big and famous city, because there is a greater chance that he would find the books needed for such an undertaking.

[14] See especially the works cited in footnote 2.

[15] For these competitions among sophists and between the different social classes in Imperial Greece, see, respectively, Gleason (1995) and Schmitz (1997).

not just on the level of content, but even on the level of linguistics, as he was supposed to speak in an artificial Attic language in which all words had to be attested in the literature of the classical period. As the famous Philagrus anecdote in Philostratus illustrates,[16] even when one was frustrated, and uttered an outlandish word, this itself became a potential reason for questioning the speaker's level of education.

III. *Canon and Repetition*

This performative aspect of *paideia* to a certain extent forced the Second Sophistic intellectuals to develop a *functional* way of talking about the books of the past, which is motivated not only by the immense pressure on the speaker, but also by the communicative function of the speaker's speeches *vis-à-vis* his audience. Even if an orator did not simply improvise on the spot, he had to make sure that his public could evaluate his level of culture.[17] A full appreciation of cultural references is achieved only if the speaker and his public share the same cultural horizon. Since the Second Sophistic orators probably addressed rather large audiences,[18] their cultural references tended to be less precious and far-fetched than, for instance, the Callimachean poets, who constantly searched for rare and austere forms of intertextuality.[19] In Lucian's *Lexiphanes*, the pedantic use of barely attested Attic words is vehemently reprehended. It is no surprise, therefore, that the number of books to which the Second Sophistic orators refer is often limited to an accepted canon of ancient Greek authors, among them, for example, Homer, Plato, Euripides, and Herodotus.[20]

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[16] Philostr., *VS* 578.

[17] Cf. Anderson (1976: 60): "An entertainer scores no points by quoting what his audience is not going to recognise."

[18] For the influence of the audience on public speech delivery in the Second Sophistic, see Korenjak (2000).

[19] See Bulloch (1985: 543): "[Hellenistic poetry] was (...) written for its own private audience, primarily a select few attached to or associated with a royal court, for which the arts were an embellishment of power: this rather rarefied audience was well educated, for the most part worldly in experience (or at least aware of the new social and geographical horizons of the expanded Greek world) and at the same time conservative in manner and taste."

[20] Cf. Morgan (2007: 216): "Graeco-Roman culture as a whole is economical in its use of authorities; a relatively small repertoire is invoked repeatedly in different contexts."

The social background of education and book reading in the Second Sophistic may also point to the function which this type of rhetorical performance served for the listeners, apart from mere amusement. For if we accept that *paideia* time and again had to be claimed and reclaimed by the *pepaideumenoi*, the inevitable process of forgetting references that were once memorized urged cultivated people of this period never to give up studying. The teacher Libanius vituperates students of his who after the completion of their education "would rather touch snakes than [books],"[21] so that they gradually lose the skills which they had once acquired through his teachings. Of course, learning and reactivating information which one had forgotten was not just a matter of book reading. Besides the time-consuming task of (re-)reading books, a cultivated man could also opt for attending public lectures delivered by other *pepaideumenoi*, in which a feasible and socially relevant selection of classical texts was presented and discussed. In this respect, the selection of texts treated in front of the audience was to a certain extent already determined by the wider social context, and the socio-cultural climate, with its focus on the oral performance of culture, seems to have supported repetitious discussions of the same canonized texts from the past (obviously, the rhetorical *way in which* the orators discussed these texts remained their own playground, and it is here that they could prove themselves more sophisticated than their peers).

IV. *Inner Books and Factual Knowledge*

In his discussion about reading and talking about books, Pierre Bayard, interestingly, develops the concept of the 'inner book', that is, the book as it is mentally construed inside one's mind, based on one's assumptions and mythic representations.[22] Driven by the therapeutic function of his own essay, Bayard defines this inner book rather from a personal and subjective point of view. However, for our present discussion it might be worthwhile to look at the concept of the 'inner book' as the result of culturally defined readings which are more or less realized through a consensus among the members of a reading community.[23]

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[21] The full sentence in Lib., *Or.* 35, 13: "Τὸ δὲ αἴτιον, οἱ μὲν ἅπτονται συγγραμμάτων, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἑρπετῶν μᾶλλον ἂν ἢ τούτων."

[22] Bayard (2007: 84), where he also hints at the existence of social and conventional 'inner books' shared by the members of a society.

[23] For reading as a socially defined practice, see, e.g., Fish (1980).

Indeed, it is not only the number of books about which Second Sophistic orators talk that is fairly restricted; there also seems to be a certain consensus as to how a book should be interpreted and what kind of references one should extract from it. As Anderson already indicated in Lucian, the orators often refer to the beginnings of books, as these are in most cases most frequently read by the public and the speaker.[24] Furthermore, there appears to be a tendency to turn to the same works or passages of a certain author. Some parts of Plato's *œuvre*, like the image of the charioteer in the *Phaedrus*,[25] are much more popular than other books or passages by the same author. Similarly, references to Homer also tend to diverge quite widely in quantity from book to book.[26] Moreover, literary protagonists can be isolated from the passages in which they occur and become a reference of their own, in a sense that they can be used to represent a prototypical or commonplace example of an emotion or a way of acting. The philosophical orator Maximus of Tyre offers a good example of this tendency:

> Πάλιν αὖ ἐπανίωμεν ἐπὶ τὸν Ὅμηρον καὶ τοὺς παρ' αὐτῷ βαρβάρους, καὶ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα ὄψει ἀρετὴν καὶ κακίαν ἀντιτεταγμένας ἀλλήλαις, ἀκόλαστον μὲν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον, σώφρονα δὲ τὸν Ἕκτορα· δειλὸν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον, ἀνδρεῖον τὸν Ἕκτορα. Κἂν τοὺς γάμους αὐτῶν ἐξετάζῃς, ὁ μὲν ζηλωτός, ὁ δὲ ἐλεεινός· ὁ μὲν ἐπάρατος, ὁ δὲ ἐπαινετός· ὁ μὲν μοιχικός, ὁ δὲ νόμιμος. Θέασαι δὲ καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἀρετὰς νενεμημένας κατ' ἄνδρα, τὴν μὲν ἀνδρείαν κατὰ τὸν Αἴαντα, τὴν δὲ ἀγχίνοιαν κατὰ τὸν Ὀδυσσέα, τὸ δὲ θάρσος κατὰ τὸν Διομήδην, τὴν δὲ εὐβουλίαν κατὰ τὸν ⟨Νέστορα·⟩ Ὀδυσσέα αὐτὸν οὗτος ἄρα εἰκόνα ἡμῖν ὑποτίθεται χρηστοῦ βίου καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀκριβοῦς, ὥστε καὶ ἀπέδωκεν αὐτῷ ἥμισυ μέρος τῶν αὐτοῦ ἔργων. Καὶ ταῦτα μέν, ὡς συλλήβδην εἰπεῖν, ἴχνη βραχέα μακρῶν λόγων.
>
> Let us return to Homer, and to the Trojans in his poem. Here too you will see Virtue and Vice ranged against each other: Paris the profligate, the sober Hector; Paris the coward, Hector the hero. You can compare their marriages too: admirable versus pitiable; accursed versus acclaimed; adulterous versus legitimate. Consider too how the other virtues are shared out character by character: bravery to Ajax, acuity to Odysseus, courage to Diomedes, good counsel to ⟨Nestor. And as for⟩ Odysseus, Homer presents him to us as such a model of the good life and of perfect virtue, that he

[24] Anderson (1976: 59–60). Anderson points out that the materiality of the book roll makes it even more necessary to start reading at the beginning of a book.

[25] For the reception of this theme and other typical themes from Plato's *Phaedrus* in Imperial literature, see Trapp (1990).

[26] For Dio Chrysostom, Aelius Aristides and Maximus of Tyre, see Kindstrand (1973: *passim*).

> actually makes him the subject of one-half of all his poetry. All these, in short, are a concise indication of what ought to receive a much longer treatment. (Max.Tyr., *Or.* 26, 6; translation: M.B. Trapp)

This can thus be labelled as Maximus' inner book, to use Bayard's terminology, but, since this type of reading is more or less shared by his contemporaries, it is not an entirely personal inner book, but rather a culturally and rhetorically mediated reading about which there must have been a wider social consensus.[27] In this type of discourse, the references have less to do with the actual act of reading Homer, but they all become a matter of plain knowledge and the display of culture.

We thus see that in the transferral process from book reading to oral performance, the canonical books risk getting stripped down to relevant facts, references and citations.[28] As a result, the canonical place of a literary work does not automatically imply that this work is most frequently read.[29] Quite significantly, the less a book seems to be read *as a story* and the more it becomes a performance through rhetorical mediation, the more it becomes a matter of knowledge which can objectively be tested. This is also illustrated by the existence of various sorts of anthologies and epitomes, in which were presented lists and short discussions of relevant references.[30] Furthermore, in rhetorical handbooks of this age, there were

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[27] These social conventions can already be traced back to the stage of education. See Cribiore (2001: 8): "Education was based on the transmission of an established body of knowledge, about which there was a wide consensus."

[28] Goldhill (2009: 111) illustrates the same principle with the example of the anecdote: "Anecdotes thus enable the elite to perform *paideia* at an everyday and oral level—to place themselves socially. A life becomes a set of brief tales, to be retold."

[29] Cf. the complex problem of canonization in literary systems as discussed in Sheffy (1990: 517): "[C]anonized items are present in the system without actually taking part in the cycle of literary production. In other words, these items are canonized in the sense that they are largely recognized and their prestige acknowledged, yet they are not central in the sense that they do not meet contemporary prevailing literary norms nor serve as active models for producing new texts; in fact, some of them are hardly circulated in the literary system in any way (if we only think about a long list of indisputable literary figures and masterpieces). In short, these items attain a high status which does not derive from their position in actual center/periphery relations."

[30] See Puiggali (1983: 320, n. 1): "Cette répétition, d' un auteur à l' autre, des mêmes citations des grandes classiques de la philosophie oblige à croire à l' existence de manuels, de compendia, dont l' usage n' exclut d' ailleurs pas, pour certains auteurs, un contact direct avec les textes." See also Reid (2001: 117): "The first century AD saw the peak of production of handbooks, miscellanies and compendia, in both [Greek and Latin]. (...) The production of the genre continued right into late antiquity." For a collection of essays dealing with matters of condensation of knowledge (some of which directly address the cultural climate of the Second Sophistic), see Horster—Reitz (2010).

two exercises which consisted of the use of *gnomai* and *chreiai*, respectively sayings of and anecdotes about wise men. In this way, an orator was self-evidently trained to use these flourishes to embellish and authorize his speech and to present himself as a cultivated person in possession of a general *paideia*.[31]

V. *The Power of the Speaker*

We have already seen that even if Second Sophistic orators went through an entire work thoroughly and diligently—as they most probably often did—, they may not have been able to remember every single passage or every single topic. Nevertheless, in their texts, they give the clear impression that they know every part of the literary culture, which is obviously an element of their strategic literary self-fashioning. Leaning on their respected position as performers in front of their audience[32] and on the monological form of their speeches, they chose what aspects of literature and culture they wanted to treat, and the public that engaged in this one-sided form of communication was basically forced to accept its own lack of power to directly question the broad culture of a speaker.

These dynamics rest on metonymical grounds, as speakers constantly rely on the principle of *pars pro toto* to establish their cultivated image. By referring to a character from a literary work, or by citing a verse, orators count on the audience's belief that their knowledge should be extended to the whole of the literary work or, *a fortiori*, to the entire culture.[33] Even Dio Chrysostom, who can be assumed to have known Homer very well, makes use of some selective short cuts to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In his fifty-third discourse *On Homer*, he first refers to the most important interpreters of Homer's text, talking about Democritus, Plato, Zeno and many others, both Greek and barbarian (§ 1–8). Subsequently, he praises

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[31] The extant rhetorical handbooks from the first centuries CE, with discussions of *chreiai* and *gnomai*, are introduced and translated in Kennedy (2003). Especially Aelius Theon and Pseudo-Hermogenes offer a good idea of the rhetorical exercises from the period of the Second Sophistic. For the role of *chreiai* and *gnomai* in popular morality in the Roman Empire, see Morgan (2007).

[32] For the rituals surrounding lecturing, which can to a certain extent be generalized to all forms of public speaking, see Goffman (1981).

[33] In this respect, an orator differs from, e.g., a rhapsode, for the former does not cite the entire text, and must therefore rely on his audience's willingness to believe that he knows the entire work well, not just the passage which he alludes to.

Homer's life and moral nobility, which he illustrates with the—rather banal—fact that Homer did not put his name under his work (§ 9–10). Only the closing paragraphs of the speech (§ 11–12) refer to the work itself, citing and discussing only a small *caput selectum*, viz. the way in which Homer talks about Zeus.

When observed from a distance, all these elements in Dio's discourse turn out to represent fairly superficial impressions about the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, their reception and their author. Quite typically, the author's extensive knowledge of Homer, which appears from some of his other discourses,[34] is not immediately reflected in this particular oration. As a result, the lack of detailed discussion of Homer's literary work in Dio's fifty-third oration tells us less perhaps about Dio's actual knowledge of Homer's literature, but rather more about the surrounding rhetorical context, which demanded from him that he make an immediate impression of being educated. Anderson's provocative conclusion that Lucian (and, for that matter, many of his contemporaries) was not thoroughly educated *because* he uses a lot of coping strategies[35] thus seems to be quite a hasty conclusion which underestimates the highly performative character of these very texts.

VI. *True and Untrue* pepaideumenoi

As I have indicated above, there were in all likelihood few uneducated speakers among the sophists whose texts we still have today—after all, these texts apparently were worth recording in the first place, and their survival during the process of transmission suggests that they were probably regarded as good texts by good *pepaideumenoi*.[36] It may also be believed, however, that apart from these sophists (and apart from the extensive list of successful sophists in Philostratus' *Vitae Sophistarum*) there were also a lot of other perhaps less educated or less talented performers at work who aimed to convince their audience that they possessed a high level of culture. The presupposition that such a group of less educated performers did indeed exist is relevant for our discussion if we want to assess the context in which the succesful sophists performed,

[34] The best known example of this is probably Dio's *Trojan Oration* (XI).

[35] See n. 1 above.

[36] One might compare this process of 'natural' selection with the form of Apuleius' *Florida*, which ought to be regarded as a canon of his most important or most beautiful verbal *tours de force*.

along with the anxieties, struggles and frustrations which this context may have awakened in them. Since there can never be a total demonstration of one's entire mastery over *paideia*, some difficulty may arise in discerning between the 'true' *pepaideumenoi*, who are regrettably forced by their social situation as public speakers to show only a small aspect of their broad culture, and some cunning orators who exploit the dynamics of talking about books to make a cultivated impression on their audience. It is against this background that we should read Lucian's *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, in which a satirical teacher of rhetoric deplores that he put so much effort into the acquisition of culture, whereas he now believes that these many hours of study are unnecessary to make a cultivated impression.[37] In the fierce competition between the 'true' *pepaideumenoi*, who took the harsh and heavy road to literate self-fashioning, and the versatile but only superficially educated babblers, we are confronted with the radical implications of the social and performative function of Imperial Greek *paideia*.

VII. *Other Contexts: Symposium and Philosophy*

To this point, I have primarily focused on rhetorical speech delivery, in which the contact between the speaker and his audience is very tense and direct. Nonetheless, in a culture which has such an overt preference for live performance and rhetorical *grandeur*, it quite naturally follows that literary production in general undergoes at least some performative dynamics of *paideia*—Lucian being an obvious example. This does not imply, however, that all sorts of literature may have felt exactly the same influence of virtuoso speech delivery. In order to round out the overall picture, I will briefly discuss two socio-cultural environments, viz. the symposium and the field of philosophy, where the performative dynamics sketched above may be felt less heavily than in other domains of Imperial Greek literature.

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[37] Luc., *Rh. Pr.* esp. 7–8. See Cribiore (2007: 83): "Lucian amply shows how [fake *pepaideumenoi*] compensated for their lack of mastery of traditional techniques by strategies of various kinds, which included flamboyant dress, elaborate gesturing, modulation of voice, and keen understanding of their audience's expectations." It is understandable why these testimonies by a satirist such as Lucian are among the few sources that tell us something about the less educated or less talented speakers of this age, as the other authors whose texts we possess must of course worry about their own (self-evident) image as *pepaideumenoi*. See also Lucian's *Adversus indoctum*.

In sympotic literature, we enter an atmosphere in which there was probably more room for intellectual *debate* between the members of a *relatively small* community, in which each member had or ought to have *equal right* to intervene in the discussion.[38] Encouraged by the consumption of wine, the tone was rather *benevolent* and *speculative*.[39] We here already find some marked differences from the practice of public speech delivery, and this has some consequences for the functions of literature in sympotic atmospheres. The range of cited works in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* and Plutarch's *Quaestiones Convivales* is larger than in most Second Sophistic declamations. We may imagine that part of the pleasure of the discussions at a symposium must have been the introduction of new or unknown material which adds fuel to the debate and has the value of novelty for the participants. In Athenaeus, we see how a shared interest in rare Attic words and grammatical constructions results in a quest for the extraordinary, where experts in these matters dig very deep in order to outsmart each other by drawing on their very broad knowledge.[40] We also see how in other symposia specific experts such as a geometer or a musician are invited to enrich the discussion with some knowledge concerning their field of expertise.[41] Nevertheless, even here we detect an overt preference for canonized authors such as Homer or Aristotle, who composed many passages that are generally and immediately present in the minds of the educated participants. Moreover, we should not forget that the symposium was also a place to educate young men, and they may obviously have benefited from the citation of canonical sources and their application to a broad range of sympotic topics.[42] The extent to which the dynamics of performative *paideia* apply to symposia as well may thus have differed from gathering to gathering.[43]

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[38] See D' Arms (1990) for the idea of equality in the Roman *convivium*.

[39] For the role of wine in making discussions more gentle and speculative, see, e.g., Plut., *Quaest. Conv.* 717A.

[40] For this and other antiquarian aspects of Imperial literature, see the recent discussions in König—Whitmarsh (2007).

[41] For such a symposium organized by Plutarch's teacher Ammonius, see Plut., *Quaest. Conv.* 737D sqq.

[42] Roskam (2009) argues that the different sympotic teaching habits of the teachers Plutarch, Calvenus Taurus and Favorinus reflect their attitude towards overt speech delivery, in that the former two encourage the young men's intervention in the discussions, whereas the latter's "intervention is much more in line with the epideictic speeches characteristic of the so-called 'Second Sophistic', which require another audience and another context" (379).

[43] The physical presence of books at a symposium also varies significantly. In Plutarch, there is almost no mention of books actually being consulted at a symposium, but in

Philosophers also used different ways of dealing with literature, such as the commentary, in which the canonical texts were very closely read and interpreted.[44] This way of reading could be seen as a radically different paradigm which forced its users to keep their focus on the text and not be carried away by some vague references by a cunning rhetorician.[45] We also see how a philosopher like Epictetus vehemently disapproves of teachers who offer a rhetorical training to their students, especially when they try to sell their paradigm as proper philosophy.[46] But, on the other hand, not every self-proclaimed philosopher appears to have been immune to the dynamics of oral speech delivery. Philosophers in general obviously honored their own canon of philosophical authorities who were frequently cited or referred to. Maximus of Tyre, whom I mentioned above, speaks about philosophical themes in a very direct and rhetorical style, thus fully engaging in the rhetorical culture of his age. The tendency to philosophical epitomization is reflected in Alcinoüs, who wrote in the second century CE a handbook of Platonism, in which a reasonable and conventional selection of doctrines based on Plato's works is presented in a way that sometimes seems to have only little to do with the original Platonic text.[47] In this respect, the rhetorical culture of the Roman Imperial age appears to have had a considerable influence on the field of philosophy as well.

Gellius, this is a very normal procedure. On Gellius' reading community, see Johnson (2009: 323): "The *raison d'être* of the group seems to be to play a particular sort of learned game, in which the participants make comments on language and literature with reference to antiquarian texts and their commentators before an appraising but largely unparticipating crowd."

[44] Dillon (1973: 54–57) argues that the philosophical commentary was already in use for school purposes in Middle-Platonism. Hadot (1987: 14–23) situates the philosophical turn to exegesis and commentary in the first century BCE.

[45] The 'objectivity' of the form of the commentary, however, is by no means guaranteed, as this genre also necessarily has to deal with subjective processes of selection and interpretation. For the discursive dimension of a (modern) commentary, see Kraus (2002).

[46] See, e.g., Epict., *Or.* III, 23, esp. 20–22, in which Epictetus opposes his own 'sincere' way of reading the Platonic writings to orators' superficial search for stylistic *grandeur*. A couple of decades earlier, Seneca Minor (*Ep.* 33, 5) already advised his pupil Lucilius to read the entire works of great figures, not just compendia about their main ideas.

[47] For an English translation of Alcinoüs's text with an introduction, see Dillon (1993).

Conclusion

I have shown that many of the short cuts to culture in Second Sophistic literature, which Graham Anderson correctly detected but fairly hastily attributed to the author's lack of education, can in fact be explained by the wider socio-cultural environment, in which the transformation from literacy to oral performative reproduction was of major importance in the pursuit of cultural capital. A Second Sophistic public was used to evaluate a speaker's cultivation on the basis of his ability to give a quick overview of his self-evident mastery over the field of Greek *paideia* (as it were as a sort of entry ticket to the stage), and only if an orator passed this first superficial test could he display his wit and verbal virtuosity in a competition with his peers for the appreciation and respect of his social world.

The results of my investigation have a twofold implication for those who want to study which books a Second Sophistic performer has actually read. On the one hand, a speaker may bluff his way out of awkward situations, claiming to have read a particular book on the basis of his superficial knowledge of it. Conversely, an author could well have read a great deal more than we can estimate, but there are good reasons why this does not appear from his texts. Firstly, the speaker could have forgotten most of the form and the content of a work, which may have caused some reluctance to refer to it. Secondly, the social context of speaking in front of an educated audience was itself responsible for a fairly respected canon of texts, the knowledge of which distinguished the educated from the uneducated. In the performance of culture, classical literature to a certain extent stopped being the written work of a particular author, and became the orators' inner book, an amalgam of cultural references for subsequent generations who talked about it and listened to it in a self-conscious fashion—the merits of which are over the past few decades widely recognized.

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EUMOLPUS *POETA* AT WORK: REHEARSED SPONTANEITY IN THE *SATYRICON*

Niall W. Slater

Abstract

The distorting mirror of Petronius's *Satyricon* offers one of the richest portraits of a poet at work in ancient literature. The impoverished poet and raconteur Eumolpus joins the action of the novel in chapter 83 when at the art gallery he attempts to pick up the narrator Encolpius by declaiming verses on the destruction of Troy. While presented as a spontaneous oral *ecphrasis* of Homeric paintings in the gallery, his recital shows numerous signs of being a previous composition, slightly or perhaps not at all adapted to the occasion. Both his literate composition and oral performance are on display later, when the scribbling poet is pulled from the wreckage of Lichas's ship and then recites epic verse on the Roman civil war. While both of Eumolpus's major poems have been studied in detail as both parody of contemporary styles and development of a key character in the novel, these and yet more poetic performances within the novel, even where unsuccessful, offer rich insight into the culture of oral performance at various levels of Neronian society. Eumolpus's two narrated stories (usually identified as Milesian tales) about his adventures with the Pergamene boy and the exemplum of the widow of Ephesus are far more successful performances. Here the poet displays a nuanced sense of both audience and occasion, and the reception of these stories by internal audiences of the novel can be read as further commentary on composition and performance in Neronian culture.

The distorting mirror of Petronius's *Satyricon* offers one of the richest portraits of a poet at work in ancient literature, in the person of the impoverished poet and raconteur Eumolpus. Eumolpus joins the action of the novel in chapter 83 when he attempts to pick up the narrator Encolpius in an art gallery. He soon replaces Ascyltos in the unstable triad with Encolpius and Giton that carries the narrative onward. His numerous performances of both poetry and prose narrative are key to the powerful impression he makes in the novel. I propose here to look at the hints of how Eumolpus prepares for his performances, particularly in poetry, but in one or two prose forms as well. My conclusion that Eumolpus is a far better storyteller than poet will surprise no one,[1] but I hope

[1] The classic discussion of Eumolpus as raconteur is Beck (1979).

also to show that a key part of Eumolpus's poetic persona is the desire to present himself as a more spontaneous, more oral performer than he actually is—yet at the same time more confined by the practices and consequences of literacy than he himself realizes. Petronius's sardonic view of both the poet and his audiences enriches our sense of the foibles and perils of Neronian performance culture.

The first encounter of Encolpius and Eumolpus takes place in a *pinacotheca*, which Mike Lippman has recently argued might be part of a temple of Fortuna.[2] While he begins his description by dropping the names of famous Greek painters (Zeuxis, Protogenes, and Apelles), what really interests Encolpius are the pictures showing the (mis)fortunes of lovers. The fates of Ganymede, Hylas, and Hyacinthus inspire him to soliloquy:

> inter quos etiam pictorum amantium vultus tamquam in solitudine exclamavi: "ergo amor etiam deos tangit." (83. 4)
>
> Among these faces of painted lovers, I burst forth, like one crying in the wilderness: "So love touches even the gods!"

Encolpius's narcissistic reading of his own fate in the art he contemplates finds echoes in ecphrastic scenes in the Greek novel, while Roman readers might also have been reminded of Aeneas's viewing of the Trojan War scenes in Carthage in *Aeneid* 1.[3] Given that Encolpius seems more interested in exercising his emotions than understanding them, an even more apt comparison might be the story of Brutus's wife Porcia, who on attempting to leave her husband in Greece is overcome by seeing a painting of Hector parting from Andromache and returns again and again to weep before it.[4]

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[2] Lippman (2008).

[3] Slater (1990: 91 and n. 9), comparing the opening ecphrastic scenes in Achilles Tatius 1. 1–2 and Longus 1. 3; whether this is specifically parody of existing Greek novel traditions is problematic, given the lack of evidence for extended Greek prose fictions before Petronius (Morgan 2009. 40–46, with further references), if we continue to assume a Neronian date (Rose [1971]); now *contra* Henderson (2010). Cf. *Aen.* 1. 462: *sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.*

[4] The story is recorded in Plutarch but, if not wholly invented, would have been current in Petronius's day as well: "Brutus determined to abandon Italy, and came by land through Lucania to Elea by the sea. As Porcia was about to return thence to Rome, she tried to conceal her distress, but a certain painting betrayed her, in spite of her noble spirit hitherto. Its subject was Greek—Andromache bidding farewell to Hector; she was taking from his arms their little son, while her eyes were fixed upon her husband. When Porcia saw this, the image of her own sorrow presented by it caused her to burst into tears, and she would visit it many times a day and weep before it" (Plutarch, *Life of Brutus* 23. 1–4, trans. Perrin).

Encolpius's soliloquy is then interrupted by a new arrival:

> ecce autem,[5] ego dum cum ventis litigo, intravit pinacothecam senex canus, exercitati vultus et qui videretur nescio quid magnum promittere, sed cultu non proinde speciosus, ut facile appareret eum ex hac nota litteratorum esse, quos odisse divites solent. is ergo ad latus constitit meum . . . (83. 8)

> Suddenly then, while I was arguing with the empty air, an old man entered the picture gallery, white-haired, with a wrought-up expression, one who seemed to promise something great, but by no means distinguished in dress, so that it became quite clear he was one of those men of letters whom the rich regularly hate. So he stopped right by my side . . .

Encolpius so often gets things wrong that we should perhaps be a bit more surprised when his reading of Eumolpus's countenance and dress seems so accurate here, since the old man immediately confirms his identity as a poet and explains his shabby dress by that profession (*propter hoc ipsum*, "for that very reason," 83. 9). In our text a short poem on this very theme follows immediately:

> qui pelago credit, magno se faenore tollit;
> qui pugnas et castra petit, praecingitur auro;
> vilis adulator picto iacet ebrius ostro,
> et qui sollicitat nuptas, ad praemia peccat:
> sola pruinosis horret facundia pannis
> atque inopi lingua desertas invocat artes. (83. 10)

> The man who trusts the sea reaps a great return for himself;
> the one who chases fights and army camps is girt with gold.
> The base flatterer sprawls drunk on purple embroideries,
> and the debaucher of brides sins profitably.
> Only eloquence shivers in hoary rags
> and appeals to deserted arts with impoverished tongue.

Although the text does not explicitly say that Eumolpus speaks these verses, this alliterative epigram seems to be his poetic calling card: a priamel and a proem to the rest of his work in the novel.[6] Within the

[5] The phrase *ecce autem* may be a subtle touch of Encolpius's self-dramatization, as the collocation is common in Plautus, particularly in comments aside (*ecce autem perii*) or soliloquy: cf. *Merc.* 748, 792; *Miles* 207, 209, 1198; *Most.* 382, 660; *Persa* 300. Cf. Kroon (1995: 266) with a few more examples from Cicero (I thank Anna Bonifazi for this reference).

[6] For a keen appreciation of the poem and its relation to Horatian and other models, see Setaioli (2010: 163–168).

context of the story, it is his "elevator speech"—a sixty-second sampler meant to grab his hearer's attention and, as such, no doubt one he has used many times before.

Further fragmented prose reflections on luxury follow, but, when continuous narrative resumes, Eumolpus is telling Encolpius—and us—the racy and highly engaging story of his seduction of the Pergamene Boy. This tale, certainly polished in many previous tellings, is well calculated for his current audience of one: Encolpius responds with enthusiasm:

> erectus his sermonibus consulere prudentiorem coepi aetates tabularum et quaedam argumenta mihi obscura simulque causam desidiae praesentis excutere ... (88.1)
>
> aroused by his discussions I began to consult this wise man about the ages of the paintings and certain stories that were obscure to me and at the same time to discuss the cause of the current cultural decline ...

"Cultural decline" is red meat to Eumolpus, who rants on that theme for another page before finally turning to the paintings:

> sed video te totum in illa haerere tabula, quae Troiae halosin ostendit. itaque conabor opus versibus pandere (89.1)
>
> but I see you are completely enthralled by that painting, which displays the sack of Troy, and so I shall try to expound the work in verse ...

Here is Eumolpus's cue for his first major poetic performance in the novel, as sixty-five verses in Senecan style follow. While presented as a spontaneous oral *ecphrasis*, his recital shows numerous signs of being a previous composition, slightly or perhaps not at all adapted to the occasion. As I have argued at length elsewhere,[7] no single painting (such as *tabula* implies) could be so crowded with incident. Nor can the story of Troy above all have been "obscure", even to a viewer as dim as Encolpius. While Eumolpus's introduction strongly implies that his verses are an attempt at oral improvisation (note *conabor ... versibus pandere*), a reader or hearer more sanguine than Encolpius might suspect the poet has been marking time with jeremiads on cultural decay and salacious narrative until he succeeds in finding a painting to which he might connect his previously composed version of the destruction of Troy.

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[7] Slater (1990: 95–101).

For this part of the *Satyricon* we rely on two different traditions of excerpts, and only one preserves the reaction of any audience beyond Encolpius to Eumolpus's performance. The verses break off in the middle of combat narrative:

> "gladios retractant, commovent orbes manu
> bellumque sumunt. hic graves alius mero
> obtruncat et continuat in mortem ultimam
> somnos, ab aris alius accendit faces
> contraque Troas invocat Troiae sacra …"

> ex is, qui in porticibus spatiabantur, lapides in Eumolpum recitantem miserunt. at ille, qui plausum ingenii sui noverat, operuit caput extraque templum profugit. timui ego ne me poetam vocaret. itaque subsecutus fugientem ad litus perveni … (89 vv. 61–65 to 90.2)

> "They draw swords, brandish shields,
> and take up the fight. Here one cuts short
> men submerged in wine and connects sleep
> to its final brother death; another lights torches from the altars
> and against Trojans musters Troy's own sacred fires …"

> Some strolling in the porticos hurled rocks at Eumolpus as he recited, while he, knowing of old this tribute to his genius, covered his head and fled the temple. I feared lest I be called a poet and so followed the fugitive to the shore …

Readers can and have discussed at length the merits of lapidation as literary criticism, but it seems unarguable that Eumolpus, who understood so well how to catch Encolpius's attention, has misjudged the occasion and audience for his verse composition. He has gone on so long that Encolpius's choice of participle (*recitantem*) suggests that even he knows the old poet is not improvising but rather reciting a previously composed text[8]—and thus once committed to a memorized text, Eumolpus cannot stop himself in response to an increasingly restive audience. The poet tacitly admits this when he compares previous audience responses to his formal recitals (note *recitarem* again):

> "o mi" inquit "adulescens, non hodie primum auspicatus sum. immo quotiens theatrum, ut recitarem aliquid, intravi, hac me adventicia excipere frequentia solet." (90. 5)

[8] Regularly for reading out from a written text from Plautus (*Persa* 528: *recitasti quod erat cerae creditum*) onward. Elsewhere in the *Satyricon*, compare Trimalchio's clerk (53.1, *qui tamquam urbis acta recitavit*) as well as Trimalchio himself reading his own painfully written epigram (55.2, *haec recitavit*) or his will (71.4, *totum a primo ad ultimum … recitavit*).

> "Young man," he said, "today's not the first time I've taken such auspices. In fact whenever I enter the theatre to recite something, the crowd usually greets me with this welcome."

Encolpius subsequently abandons Eumolpus at the baths on account of his recital (*nam in balneo carmen recitabat*, 91. 3),[9] but the poet catches up with him at his lodgings—and starts in again, declaiming more moralizing verse on the desire for unobtainable luxury. The verses are so banal, illustrating a prose proverb on wanting what one cannot have, that the most interesting part may be Encolpius's response:

> "hoc est" inquam "quod promiseras, ne quem hodie versum faceres?" (93. 3)

> "Is this in fact what you promised me," I said, "that you wouldn't make any more verses today?"

versum faceres strongly implies that Encolpius fails to recognize this verse as one more random track from Eumolpus's poetic iPod, mistaking it for real improvisation. Thus far then, his interactions are building a picture of Eumolpus as one with a well-stocked poetic larder, trying to appear improvisational by doing his best to stage-manage occasions on which he can offer previously composed verse as seemingly spontaneous responses to circumstances. Encolpius does not see or hear the difference—but we as readers should.

The next long sequence in the novel, the adventures aboard Lichas's ship, conforms to this pattern, but adds details. Encolpius continues to take Eumolpus's poetic powers at face value, while other audiences are less easily swayed. Eumolpus seems to have more success with audiences when actually showing his hand as a writer—but those successes prove illusory or evanescent, setting the stage for his final major composition and performance in the novel.

Encolpius decides they must leave town to escape Ascyltos, who is seeking to reclaim Giton. Eumolpus leads the party unbeknownst onto the ship of Lichas—the man Encolpius and Giton most want to avoid. Desperate to avoid detection, they appeal to Eumolpus for help. The poet resorts to a strategy of improvisational writing: he tries to turn Encolpius and Giton into the picture of runaway slaves by shaving their

[9] Eumolpus himself cheerfully acknowledges the response he got there: *"nam et dum lavor" ait "paene vapulavi, quia conatus sum circa solium sedentibus carmen recitare . . ."* (92. 6, "In fact, while I was bathing," he said, "I almost got beaten up, because I tried to recite a poem to those sitting around . . .").

heads and writing fake brand marks with ink on their foreheads.[10] Petronius's text repeatedly emphasizes that the false brands are an inscription (*notans inscriptione*, 103. 1),[11] huge letters (*ingentibus litteris*, 103. 4) composing an *epigramma* (103. 4).[12] Eumolpus's writing thus seeks to force viewers to attend only to the text as text, diverting attention from the faces beneath the text. This text begins to unravel when the fugitives are dragged before Lichas to be questioned, because another passenger has complained about the ill-omened shaving of their heads by night. Eumolpus insists that he did this only in the interests of legibility:

> iussi squalorem damnatis auferri; simul ut notae quoque litterarum non obumbratae comarum praesidio totae ad oculos legentium acciderent (105. 2)
>
> I ordered the shaggy stuff removed from the rascals so that also the marks of the letters, all unshadowed by the protection of hair, should reach the eyes of readers.

Then a different kind of writing on the body exposes the oral truth: when Lichas orders them flogged to expiate the ill omen, Giton's screams reveal his identify to Tryphaena's maids, who appeal to stop the beating.[13] Tryphaena still thinks the brands are real, but Lichas denounces her stupidity[14]—and his own for being deceived:

> nunc mimicis artibus petiti sumus et adumbrata inscriptione derisi (106. 1)
>
> We've been attacked by theatrical devices and made fools of by the shadow of an inscription.

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[10] Rimell (2002: 114–115) sees in the mention of their foreheads (*frontes*) a metaphorical allusion to the outer part of a book roll (*frons* in Tibullus 3. 13 and Ovid *Tristia* 1. 1. 110); the fake brands are thus (false) titles.

[11] *inscriptio* can by itself imply poetic composition: after he frees the slave boy who fell on and injured him, Trimalchio says the incident must not pass *sine inscriptione* (55.2) and laboriously composes on papyrus (*codicillos*) a three-line poem consisting of two hexameters and a pentameter. Edmunds (2009: 81) suggests that *inscriptio* is the proper term for this poetic form.

[12] Setaioli (2010: 167 and n. 27): "poetry pursued in a different way".

[13] Lichas recognizes Encolpius by a different bodily inscription, ignoring his inscribed face (*nec faciem meam consideravit*, 105. 9) in favor of grabbing his eponymous crotch in an explicitly noted parody of the identifying scar of Ulysses.

[14] Translators regularly fudge the very strange formulation Lichas uses: "*feminam simplicem, tamquam vulnera ferro praeparata litteras biberint*" ("you stupid woman, as if wounds made by iron had drunk the letters," 106. 1). Runaway slaves were regularly branded, not tattooed, but the liquid metaphor may hint at the latter—while linking it more clearly to a metaphor of manuscript ink.

With their facial texts erased,[15] both are threatened with further punishment by Lichas. Tryphaena, however, intervenes to win a truce, and Eumolpus seizes the moment for a new prose composition—drawing up a peace treaty:

> utitur paenitentiae occasione dux Eumolpus et castigato ante vehementissime Licha tabulas foederis signat, quis haec formula erat: "ex tui animi sententia, ut tu, Tryphaena, … item, Licha, ex tui animi sententia …
> (109. 1–3)
>
> Our leader Eumolpus seized the opportunity as they relented and, after the liveliest reproof of Lichas, sealed the text of a peace treaty with the following terms: "that you for your part, Tryphaena, agree … likewise, you for your part, Lichas, agree …"

The relation of oral performance to writing is quite intriguing here: after chastising Lichas, Eumolpus addresses both Tryphaena and Lichas by turns in the second person. He seems to be summarizing orally a written text that he is quickly scribbling in his wax tablets (*tabulas foederis*).[16] It is more likely that the written text is framed in third person (though possibly first), but in the immediate situation he transforms this into a conversational second person account.[17] Nonetheless they give their assent to his oral performance of the summary, rather than reading the text themselves—and then seal it with kisses all around.

An idyllic calm settles over the ship, a feast begins, and all have a few drinks. Eumolpus's next oral performances, however, while trying to further the good feeling, fall noticeably flat:

> iam Lichas redire mecum in gratiam coeperat, iam Tryphaena Gitona extrema parte potionis spargebat, cum Eumolpus et ipse vino solutus dicta voluit in calvos stigmososque iaculari, donec consumpta frigidissima urbanitate rediit ad carmina sua coepitque capillorum elegidarion dicere:

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[15] 108.2: *ut vero spongia uda facies plorantis detersa est et liquefactum per totum os atramentum omnia scilicet lineamenta fuliginea nube confudit* ("when in fact a wet sponge erased my pitiable face and liquified ink definitely blurred all my features with a sooty cloud …"). The Romans used a wet sponge to erase writing on papyrus or parchment, as is clear from various anecdotes. When someone asked Augustus how "his Ajax" was doing (a tragedy he was composing), he joked that *Aiacem suum in spongeam incubuisse* ("Ajax had fallen on his sponge," Suetonius, *Life of Augustus* 85)!

[16] For the plan at Croton for Eumolpus to rewrite the tablets of his will monthly (117. 10), cf. note 28 below, although we never see Eumolpus writing there.

[17] Might we term this "free direct discourse"? Compare the discussion by Deborah Beck at the conference.

9.1 “quod solum formae decus est, cecidere capilli,
vernantesque comas tristis abegit hiemps.
nunc umbra nudata sua iam tempora maerent,
areaque attritis ridet adusta pilis.
o fallax natura deum: quae prima dedisti
aetati nostrae gaudia, prima rapis.”

* * *

10.1 “infelix, modo crinibus nitebas
Phoebo pulchrior et sorore Phoebi.
at nunc levior aere vel rotundo
horti tubere, quod creavit unda,
ridentes fugis et times puellas.
ut mortem citius venire credas,
scito iam capitis perisse partem.”

(110.) plura volebat proferre, credo, et ineptiora praeteritis, cum ancilla Tryphaenae Gitona in partem navis inferiorem ducit corymbioque dominae pueri adornat caput. (109.8–110.1)

Presently Lichas was beginning to warm up to me again, while Tryphaena was flicking the dregs of her drink at Giton, when Eumolpus, himself the worse for drink, tried to launch some remarks at bald and branded men. Once his tedious wit ran out, he returned to his verses and began to propound a short elegy on hair:

“The only glory of beauty, the hair has fallen
and sad winter has swept away the locks of spring.
Now the bereft temples grieve for their former shade,
and a scorched patch gleams with the hair worn away.
O treacherous nature of the gods! The joys you first give
to our life, you first snatch away.”

“Poor soul, just now with your hair you shone
brighter than Apollo and the sister of Apollo.
But now, slicker than brass or the domed
garden truffle, which the rain brought forth,
you dodge away and shrink from the laughing girls,
So that you may understand how swiftly death comes,
know that a part of your head is already dead.”

He was wanting to pour forth more stuff, even clumsier than the preceding, when Tryphaena’s maid took Giton below decks and spruced up his head with her mistress’s hair extensions.

“Propound” is my somewhat artificial translation for *dicere*, designed to fudge the issue, as I believe Petronius desires to do, of whether Eumolpus’s return to poetry represents awkward spontaneous composition, once

again the use of previously composed material, or both.[18] The poet's theme of bald and branded men, of course, is a direct result of his previous failure at improvisational writing. The verses shift suddenly in meter: only the first six are in elegiacs, corresponding to the traditional associations of *elegidarion*, but the theme continues in the new meter.[19] The reader's reception of Eumolpus's verses here may be complicated by memories of a poetic performance by the rhetoric teacher Agamemnon in the earliest surviving part of the *Satyricon*, where he offers Encolpius a *schedium* of his views on the art of rhetoric that he promises will be in verse (*carmine effingam*, 4. 5). Agamemnon's use of the singular *carmine* implies one poem, but what emerges are eight verses in scazons, followed by fourteen in hexameters—all on the theme of rhetoric, though in rather different style.[20] For most readers, the term *schedium* implies improvisation, even more so when linked with the future verb *effingam*.[21]

[18] Slater (1990: 183–184) suggests that the elegiacs might be previously composed verse, the hendecasyllables true improvisation—but both could be from stock.

[19] A strong majority of commentators assume these are two separate poems, possibly with a prose bridge lost between them: see recently and thoroughly Habermehl (2006. 471–479). Setaioli (2010. 177–191) argues for a unified composition, along with a less formal and more thematic meaning for *elegidarion*. He makes an intriguing case (with ample discussion of previous scholarship) for a connection with a scoptic tradition of poetry later exemplified by Synesius, *Encomium on Baldness*.

[20] For an insightful analysis of the style, see Petersmann (1999. 120–122), who does take Agamemnon's composition as a single poem, but does not address the issue of improvisation. Beck (1973: 47) takes both Eumolpus's verses here and Agamemnon's at *Sat.* 5 as single poems. Cf. Setaioli (2010: 14–49 and 177–191), who lays considerable stress on the notion that Agamemnon's *sed* at 5. 9 could not begin an independent poem (as well as other thematic connections between the metrically disparate verses). Much depends on whether Agamemnon is a good enough poet to know this.

[21] Arrowsmith (1959: 23) freely renders *schedium* as "let me extemporize", Branham and Kinney 1996 "a little down-home improvisation". The only other use of the noun cited by the *OLD* s.v. is in the preface to Apuleius's *de deo Socratis* 1, where intriguingly such improvisation is also associated with Lucilius. Apuleian authorship of this preface has been disputed, but see Hunink (1995). In Paulus's excerpts from Festus we find the claim *mala poemata schedia appellantur* (*exc.*, p. 451, 9–11 Lindsay). Setaioli (2010: 16–17 and *passim* with ample discussion of previous scholarship), following a view first suggested by Collignon, argues that the *schedium* refers to a previous poem, perhaps recited by Encolpius, but now not in our text, while the *carmine* alone refers to Agamemnon's forthcoming performance. A full discussion of the history of this dispute is beyond the scope of a footnote, but if Encolpius has just offered an improvised *schedium*, Agamemnon's effort seems likely to be presented in a similar fashion—whether we are to believe that is its aetiology within the world of the novel or not. On the significance of future *effingam*, cf. Edmunds (2009: 80).

Yet more than one reader has been taken by the notion that Agamemnon's seeming improvisation in two verse forms "mimics" the effect of Persius's choliambic prologue followed by the hexameters of his *Satire* 1.[22] Will a sophisticated reader hear an allusion to a recently deceased and even more recently published satirist and conclude that Agamemnon must have put this diptych together in advance, while another reader hears only a jumble of different verse forms as true improvisation, but much less skilled?[23] Agamemnon's example does not guide us later: Eumolpus's shift in meter here is, if anything, more marked than Agamemnon's. Perhaps he is trying to improvise, but six elegiac lines lead him to a conclusion, even though he is not ready to conclude, and he must try another form.[24] Or we might be meant to see these as further short samples from the verses that he has in stock. In either case, he stops only because part of his audience is taken away.

Even as all grow more inebriated and more amorous, Encolpius continues to fear that Eumolpus will somehow turn his poetic powers on him:

> me nihil magis pudebat quam ne Eumolpus sensisset, quicquid illud fuerat, et homo dicacissimus carminibus vindicaret (113. 12)
>
> Nothing shamed me more than the fear that Eumolpus might have sensed what was going on, and that supremely sharp-tongued man might take his vengeance in verse …

Instead, Eumolpus finally hits on the kind of oral performance in which he has succeeded before—another Milesian tale:

> ceterum Eumolpos, et periclitantium advocatus et praesentis concordiae auctor, ne sileret sine fabulis hilaritas, multa in muliebrem levitatem coepit

[22] See Stubbe (1933: 156), Courtney (2001: 59), and Edmunds (2009: 84–85).

[23] Persius died in 62, and his poems were only issued posthumously.

[24] Edmunds (2009) treats Agamemnon's verse in 5 as a single poem, Eumolpus's offerings at 109 as two, but his ambitious and thoughtful attempt to formulate narratological rules for the occurrence of verse in Petronius includes (77) rule 1.4: "Neither the narrator nor a character may deliver more than one poem at one time." At the same time he wishes to have no more than two exceptions to any rule (74), and like many others he takes Encolpius's two quatrains at 80.9 as two poems. Allowing Agamemnon's verse to be two poems, just like Eumolpus's, would necessitate abandoning his rule 1.4. It seems likely to me, however, that even a reader hearing an allusion to Persius would hear the separate verse forms, like Persius's prologue and first *Satire*, as two independent poems. *Contra* Setaioli (2010), who sees why the association with Persius seems "natural" (20) but insists it is inapposite because the verses "though differing in meter and content, are fused and integrated to form an organic unity" (21).

> iactare ... nec se tragoedias veteres curare aut nomina saeculis nota, sed rem sua memoria factam, quam expositurum se esse, si vellemus audire. conversis igitur omnium in se vultibus auribusque sic orsus est.
>
> (110. 6–8)
>
> But Eumolpus, both our advocate when we were in peril and the author of our present harmony, so that good feeling would not fall silent for lack of stories, began to toss out many insults against the flightiness of women ... nor did he care about hoary tragedies or names known to the ages, but about something done in his own lifetime—a story he'd tell, if we wanted to hear it. So with every eye and ear turned to him he began as follows.

What follows is the superb Milesian tale of the Widow of Ephesus. The widow, famous for her chastity and so devoted to her deceased husband that she enters the tomb with him, intends to starve herself to death over his corpse. A soldier, set to guard the bodies of crucified criminals nearby, falls in love with her, and aided by her Vergil-quoting maid, tempts the widow back to life and love. The family of one of the crucified bandits takes advantage of the soldier's absence to remove and bury one of the bodies. In fear, the soldier plans to commit suicide—but the widow now persuades *him* to live by offering the body of her late husband to be crucified in place of the missing criminal's corpse.

As is often noted, Eumolpus's story provokes varying reactions from his shipboard audience:[25]

> risu excepere fabulam nautae, erubescente non mediocriter Tryphaena vultumque suum super cervicem Gitonis amabiliter ponente. at non Lichas risit, sed iratum commovens caput ... (113. 1–2)
>
> The sailors laughed at the story, while Tryphaena blushed deeply and hid her face cozily against Giton's neck. Lichas, however, did not laugh, but shaking his head angrily ...

The sailors laugh, while Tryphaena blushes and Lichas, the captain, is outraged at the behavior of the libidinous widow.[26] While readers both scholarly and general have often sided with one of these audience

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[25] Slater (1990: 110–111).

[26] At the conference Deborah Beck suggested that Petronius may here allude to the varying audience reactions to the song of Demodocus at the end of *Odyssey* 8: while the rest of the guests are enjoying the bard's song, Alcinous notices that his as yet unrecognized guest is weeping and calls on Demodocus to stop since "he by no means gratifies all in singing these things" (οὐ γάρ πως πάντεσσι χαριζόμενος τάδ' ἀείδει, 8. 538) and seeks rather that "we all may enjoy ourselves, hosts and guest alike" (ἵν' ὁμῶς τερπώμεθα πάντες / ξεινοδόκοι καὶ ξεῖνος, 8. 542–543). Given that Eumolpus himself

reactions, since Arrowsmith and Bakhtin there has been a strong tendency to see in the story a comic triumph of life over death—for both. He saves her from self-starvation, while, in the words of Julia Roberts at the end of *Pretty Woman*, "she rescues him right back."[27] The power of poetic performance is key to that triumph: it is precisely the maid's quotation of Vergil that persuades the widow first to eat and then to love again.[28]

Thus Eumolpus's prose performance, including his performance of the maid performing Vergil, seems to have shaped reality effectively. Amidst the varied reactions, the laughter of the sailors predominates. Lichas denounces the widow, but Encolpius's comment on that anger shows the struggle in the main narrative between one verbal regime and another:

> sed nec foederis verba permittebant meminisse, nec hilaritas, quae occupaverat mentes, dabat iracundiae locum. (113. 4)

> but neither did the terms of the treaty allow looking backward, nor did the merriment that seized our minds allow a place for anger.

The text becomes more fragmentary here, as the treaty's control begins to fail: memories and anger at past injuries seem to be just breaking forth again as a great storm arises, and the ship is battered to pieces.

The death of Lichas and the wreck of the ship create an obvious dividing point in the narrative for all the characters—except, in striking ways, for Eumolpus. Events prove him completely wrapped up in his compositional process, one in which writing plays a key part. Yet only the disaster can expose to the view of others how implicated writing is in his composition. Encolpius and Giton are still bound to the mast of the wrecked hulk. Fishermen come to plunder it,[29] but

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previously characterized Lichas's ship as the cave of the Cyclops (101. 7: "*fingite*" *inquit* "*nos antrum Cyclopis intrasse*"), it is very appealing to see him as an oblivious Demodocus here, failing to unify the internal audience in *hilaritas*, but succeeding admirably with the external audience.

[27] Courtney (2001: 173) finds "the artistry of this story is beyond all praise", emphasizing how the widow and soldier exchange the role of the suicidal Dido—though neither carries through. Courtney is particularly sensitive to echoes of Roman tragedy in the text, such as Accius's *video sepulcra duo duorum corporum* (655 Ribbeck) behind the widow's *duorum mihi carissimorum hominum duo funera spectem*.

[28] In her chapter, "How to eat Virgil", Victoria Rimell (2002: 123–139) connects food and consumption here with patterns throughout the *Satyrica* and especially with the Cyclops Polyphemus for a much darker vision of the story.

[29] In a wonderfully alliterative sentence: *procurrere piscatores parvulis expediti navigiis ad praedam rapiendam* (114. 14). Rimmel (2009: 70) thinks these are Crotonian legacy hunters rather than actually fisherman, but that may carry metaphor too far.

turn rescuers when they find survivors. Encolpius and Giton then pull Eumolpus from the wreckage:

> audimus murmur insolitum et sub diaeta magistri quasi cupientis exire beluae gemitum. persecuti igitur sonum invenimus Eumolpum sedentem membranaeque ingenti versus ingerentem. mirati ergo quod illi vacaret in vicinia mortis poema facere, extrahimus clamantem iubemusque bonam habere mentem. at ille interpellatus excanduit et "sinite me" inquit "sententiam explere; laborat carmen in fine." inicio ego phrenetico manum iubeoque Gitona accedere et in terram trahere poetam mugientem.
> (115. 1–5)

> We heard a strange sound under the captain's cabin, like the groaning of a monster trying to get out, so we followed the sound and found Eumolpus sitting and writing verses on a huge parchment. We were amazed that he had time in the face of death to create poetry. We dragged him out protesting and told him to cheer up. But he flared up at the interruption and said "Let me finish the concept; the poem is struggling at the ending." I laid hold of the lunatic and told Giton to come help drag the moaning poet ashore.

The comedy of this spectacle has always appealed, but some less noted details should command our attention. The *murmur ... et ... gemitum* seems to be part of Eumolpus's compositional practice: he is speaking his lines aloud as composes them. Once he achieves what he wants, however, he apparently writes them down in final form. Although it is part of the comedy to imagine him putting ink to parchment in the midst of a waterlogged and sinking ship, we also note a surprising absence: Eumolpus does *not* compose on wax tablets (such as we know he possessed at the time of his composition of the treaty on board), which would allow him further thought and revision. Rather, he records his lines permanently on parchment.

What is perhaps Eumolpus's only truly improvised poetic composition and performance occurs soon thereafter. A day after the wreck, Lichas's body floats ashore to be found by Encolpius, who soliloquizes over his fate. The survivors then cremate him with a little ceremony:

> et Licham quidem rogus inimicis collatus manibus adolebat. Eumolpus autem dum epigramma mortuo facit, oculos ad arcessendos sensus longius mittit ... (115. 20)

> And indeed a pyre gathered by his enemies' hands consumed Lichas. While Eumolpus however fashioned an epitaph for the deceased, he cast his eyes quite far afield for summoning ideas ...

For once, Eumolpus does not seem to have poetic stock on hand for the occasion. There seems to be a lacuna after the second sentence here, so

the thought might be going in an unknown direction, but the reference to Eumolpus casting his eyes about in search of inspiration is novel in our portrait of the poet, who has so often seemed oblivious to his surroundings while composing. Intriguingly, this one likely improvisation is not recorded for the text's readers, so we cannot compare it to his more prepared compositions.

What Eumolpus was composing amidst the shipwreck finally emerges on the road to Croton. The survivors' first order of business is to agree on a promising con game, in which Eumolpus will play a childless old man in order to entice and fleece legacy hunters.[30] Only when this scenario has been fully worked out orally is there leisure for Eumolpus to entertain the others with his grandest poetic performance.

Eumolpus's hexameters on the Roman civil war, conventionally known as the *Bellum Civile*, have been much studied, particularly in relation to Lucan's epic on the same theme. Rather than revisit these discussions, it will be more profitable for a study of composition and performance to focus, not on the hundreds of lines of the *Bellum Civile* itself, but on Eumolpus's personal *ars poetica*, his personal theory of composition in chapter 118 that precedes his performance:

> ceterum neque generosior spiritus vanitatem amat, neque concipere aut edere partum mens potest nisi ingenti flumine litterarum inundata. refugiendum est ab omni verborum, ut ita dicam, vilitate et sumendae voces a plebe semotae, ut fiat "odio profanum vulgus et arceo". praeterea curandum est ne sententiae emineant extra corpus orationis expressae, sed intexto vestibus colore niteant. Homerus testis et lyrici Romanusque Vergilius et **Horatii curiosa felicitas**. ceteri enim aut non viderunt viam qua iretur ad carmen, aut visam timuerunt calcare. **ecce belli civilis ingens opus quisquis attigerit nisi plenus litteris, sub onere labetur**. non enim res gestae versibus comprehendendae sunt, quod longe melius historici faciunt, sed per ambages deorumque ministeria et fabulosum sententiarum tormentum **praecipitandus est liber spiritus**, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat quam religiosae orationis sub testibus fides.

> But the large-minded among us are no friends of empty discourse. A mind simple cannot conceive and bring to term its offspring unless it is flooded with an immense river of literature. We must flee from all cut-rate words, so to speak, and take up expressions quite apart from those the mob uses. We must bring to life those noble words: "I hate the unholy crowd and keep

[30] Note that Eumolpus's writing will play a key role in this portrayal: he must sit at his accounts daily and *rewrite* his will monthly (*sedeat praeterea quotidie ad rationes tabulasque testamenti omnibus* ⟨*mensibus*⟩ *renovet*, 117. 10).

> it far away." What else? We must take care not to let the aphorisms stick out beyond the body of the argument. Let them glow with natural color, like threads woven into a garment. Homer is witness to this, along with the lyric poets, and Roman Vergil, and **the finicky genius of Horace**. All the other authors either didn't see the road to literature, or saw it and feared to tread it. **For example, whoever takes up the great task of writing about the Civil War will fall under the load unless he is stuffed with literature**. The task is not to encompass the facts with poetry—historians are far better at fact. No, the poet must use riddling locution and divine interventions and a twisted mass of thoughts **to set his inspiration free, to send it headlong**. He must appear as a prophet raving rather than someone giving testimony under oath, backed by witnesses. (trans. S. Ruden,[31] emphasis mine)

Edward Courtney insists there are just three possibilities of how to view the combination of Eumolpus's poetic principles here with his practice as demonstrated by his *Bellum Civile* itself: *a*) this *ars poetica* is "to be taken seriously as representing the views of Petronius himself", and the *Bellum Civile* is a serious attempt to practice those views; *b*) his *ars poetica* is serious, but the *Bellum Civile* shows the failure of Eumolpus to live up to those ideals; or *c*) neither the *ars poetica* nor the *Bellum Civile* is to be taken seriously.[32] Courtney rejects *c* out of hand. Admitting that the *Bellum Civile* itself is not very good, he nonetheless thinks Petronius too good a writer not to have realized this and so settles on *b*: the principles are serious, but the practice is flawed. Some, such as Catherine Connors but even more Victoria Rimell, try to defend the *Bellum Civile* by finding in it many more layers and kinds of allusion to other parts of the *Satyrica* and indeed the rest of Roman literature. When Eumolpus praises *Horatii curiosa felicitas*, Courtney renders it as "Horace's studied felicity" and is content to say that such views "have not struck many as nonsense".[33] Of course, that sounds less convincing if one translates *curiosa felicitas* as "the finicky genius of Horace", as Ruden does.[34] Conte digs deeper to find contradictions between Horatian control and the headlong spirit (note *praecipitandus est liber spiritus*,)[35] that Eumolpus praises, but Quintilian and others condemn.

[31] Ruden (2000: 98).
[32] Courtney (2001: 186). Arrowsmith (1959: 185) formulated the problem succinctly; cf. Beck (1979).
[33] Courtney (2001: 186).
[34] Ruden (2000: 98).
[35] Conte (1996: 68–72); see also Rimell (2002: 182–183).

One statement, however, seems to be taken seriously by virtually every critic, perhaps because it seems to license so explicitly the poetic practice of allusion, the Holy Grail of contemporary Latin scholarship: *ecce belli civilis ingens opus quisquis attigerit nisi plenus litteris, sub onere labetur.*[36] No one else seems to notice what I find very funny in this little statement, the almost farcical mismatch of metaphors in *plenus* and *labetur*: unless the poet is pumped full of literature, he will slip and fall under the weight of a work on the Civil War. But literature itself must have weight and volume; so how does being weighed down with a load of literature help the poet carry another burden? Yet critic after critic sees nothing funny here, and a translator as skilled as Arrowsmith seems intent on making the clumsiness of the Latin disappear in smooth, even grandiloquent English translation.

A great deal goes into Eumolpus's literary stuffing, and at this point we cannot even begin to enumerate the allusions, most of which were already noted by Collignon in 1892 and more recently richly explored by Connors.[37] One striking oddity is his use of the phrase *opus … attigerit*. Translators of Petronius most commonly render *attingo* here as "undertake," not one of the verb's standard meanings, which otherwise emphasize physical or metaphorical contact. Indeed, in Roman comedy and elegy *attingo* can be a verb for sexual assault. In fact, the only example of this verb with the object *opus* in Roman poetry preceding Eumolpus is found not in Vergil or Lucan, but in the *Cynegetica* of the justly obscure Augustan didactic poet, Grattius.[38] The reader who hears the echo of Grattius here in Eumolpus might even couple with it the image of the headlong, unbridled spirit of poetry earlier, *praecipitandus est liber spiritus*, where others have noted the horsy imagery. Poetry for Eumolpus is like letting the horse run away with the chariot—and this is just what his poem on the Civil War does, with 294 lines of scene setting before any earthly action can be engaged.

And the audience reaction? There is none—other than to note the poem's tidal wave of words:

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[36] For Rimell and Connors in particular, this is a foundational text. Rimell (2002: 78): "For instance, anyone who **tackles the huge theme** of civil war will sink under the pressure unless he is full of literature." Connors (1998: 115): "Look, if anyone **undertakes the huge task** of composing poetry on civil war without being full of literature, he will falter under the burden."

[37] Collignon (1892), Connors (1998).

[38] Slater (2007).

> cum haec Eumolpos ingenti volubilitate verborum effudisset, tandem Crotona intravimus. (124. 2)
>
> When Eumolpus had poured all this out with an immense flood of words, at last we entered Croton.

Yet there may be an implied comment in an echo of the key terms here just a few lines later, for when Eumolpus and his troupe encounter the first legacy hunters at Croton, the heaped up flood of words (*exaggerata verborum volubilitate*, 124. 3) of their prearranged scenario pours forth from all of them.[39]

From these scattered and still very incomplete pieces, a portrait of one Neronian poet at work has emerged. We have seen and heard Eumolpus at work in small forms and large before widely varying and usually unappreciative audiences. He clearly tries to cultivate the image of a spontaneous, still largely oral poet when performing in social settings such as the gallery or as peacemaker on board ship, but only the dim Encolpius seems regularly persuaded by this image, and even he shows hints of doubt. Eumolpus's real oral success is as a raconteur: his tale of the Pergamene Boy is perfectly calculated for an audience of one, and the Widow of Ephesus proves both for the audience within the narrative and its post-classical reception to have very powerful appeal. His record as a writer is much more varied: his fictional inscription in the form of brands fails, a written peace treaty holds for a time, and the laborious mixture of oral draft then fixed in written form and apparently memorized for oral performance yields a *Bellum Civile* that inundates rather than moves his audience. His oxymoronic theory of composition—only a full load of previous literature can keep the poet from falling under the burden of the task—demonstrates its failure amidst a wealth of allusion to poets good and bad.

As the old actor's saying goes, sincerity is the hardest thing: if you can learn to fake that, you can learn to fake anything. Eumolpus strives mightily to give the impression of a traditional poet, spontaneously performing in forms both small and large, and he proves a far better actor than he is a poet. His failures are not always obvious or unsympathetic, and the final mismatch of his ambitious poetic theory and awkward practice offers a nuanced critique of the dilemmas for composing poetry

[39] Proposals have been made to emend the first instance of *volubilitate* (Fraenkel) or delete the second (Stöcker) to avoid the echo, but Mueller retains the text in both instances.

in post-Horatian and post-Vergilian age.[40] Stuffed with others' poetry, Eumolpus produces epic empty of action. And yet, we can admire his ambition: after all, to misquote Browning—a man's reach should exceed his grasp, else what's a Croton for?

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[40] Cf. briefly Panayotakis (2009: 50–55), with further references.

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INDEX

Achilles, 37–38
Agamemnon, 39
allegoresis, 189–190, 195–197
allusion, 261
Aphrodite, 46–47
Apollo, 39, 48
ἆρα, 106, 119–120
Ares, 46–48
assertive, 30–31
audience (internal and/or external), 4, 5–6, 7, 21, 35–36, 37, 39, 46, 50–51, 67, 113–124, 120–122, 131–132, 145, 185, 195–197, 198, 202, 232, 233, 236, 241, 246, 249, 250, 256–257, 261; as overhearers 123–124. *See also* engagement

Balochistan, storytellers in, 68–69
bard *see* singer
Bhāgavatapurāṇa, summary of, 130
blues, 67
book(s), 135–138, 202, 204, 227–241 (*passim*)
branding, 250–251

canon, 228, 233, 235, 239
capital, religious 134–135; social 134
Chaldean theology, 188
chreiai, 236
Christianity, 190–191, 197, 198
classifications, 216–217
colon/cola, 102–103, 105–106
commentary, 154 n.7, 240
communication of literature, 231, 232, 236–237, 239–240
composition, 4–22 (*passim*), 55–82 (*passim*), 245–263 (*passim*); collaborative, 174–175; practice of, 258; theory of, 259, 262
conversational exchange, 30–31, 49

deixis, 26
Demodocus, 25–51 (*passim*), 256 n.26
dialect, 56–65
diegesis, 165; extradiegetic inquiry, 171
directive, 30–31, 47
discourse: acts, 93; generative 154; markers 93–94; marking (multimodality of), 90–91, 102, 107
discussion, 191–197, 209, 213, 239–240

ecphrasis/ecphrastic scenes, 245–246, 248
elegidarion, 254
elenchus, 157–158; double objective of, 157 n.15; Gregory Vlastos (on), 157 n.15; and pleasure, 158–159; pleasure-imitation model of, 159, 179–180; spectacle of, 158–159, 169; 'say what you believe' rule of, 157, 171
emotive, 30, 48
engagement, immersive, 152–180 (*passim*); Alexander Nehamas (on), 177; substitution, 162–163, 180; of audience/participant, 155, 156, 163–173, 173–177, 180; of bystander/respondent, 156, 157–163; of reader/performer, 155; Ruby Blondell (on), 154, 178 n.53
epigram, 247, 249 n.8, 251
epitomization, 235
eristic practice/exponent, 157 n.15, 168 n.32, 172 n.40
esoteric (work), 219–220 (*see also* exoteric work)
ethnopoetics, 90
exoteric (work), 219–220 (*see also* esoteric)

extradiegetic level, 163–164, 164–173. *See also* intradiegetic level

factual knowledge, 235
figurative spectrum of distribution, 60–69, 72–81
forgetting, 230, 233
formulaic style, 219
fourth-wall, 158 n.16
framing, 111–112
friends, 209
friendship, 202, 208, 213, 221

γάρ-clause, 38–40, 42
gnômai, 236

Helius, 46
Hephaestus, 46–48
Hermes, 48
Homer 9–10, 12–13, 22, 71–82 (*passim*), 102–107, 234, 236–237, 259–260; *Iliad*, 76–80, 80–81, 164, 237; *Odyssey*, 5–22, 31–51, 103–106, 164, 237. *See also* narrator, main
Homeric similes, 71–82; idiolectal, 71–82; insects in, 76–77, 79; lions in, 77–79; narrative scenarios in, 74; repeated verbatim, 72–73; 'shared' elements, 56–82 (*passim*)
Horace, 247 n.6, 259–260

idiolect, 56–82 (*passim*)
illocutionary act, 114–115
improvisation, 67–68, 142–143, 160, 171, 176, 177, 178, 232, 248, 250, 254–255, 258, 259
'inner book', 233–236, 241
inscription, 251–252
intradiegetic level, 163–164, 164–173. *See also* extradiegetic level

knowledge, 209, 217–218, 221
koinônia, 194–195
Kurpershoek, P. Marcel, 62–63, 68–69

learning, 202; rote, 218, 230; together, 202, 208, 209–210, 212–213
libraries, 231
listening, 219
lists, 216–217, 221, 235
literacy, 201–226 (*passim*), 228
literature, 227–241; as a socio-cultural praxis, 229
Lord, Albert, xi–xii, 58 n.6, 59, 73
love (see *philia*)
Lucan, 259–261

maieutics, 185
manuscript, 204
materiality, 215–216, 221
melodic units, 91–92
memoranda, 214–215, 218, 221, 230–231
memorization/memorizing, 207–208, 249. *See* also learning (rote)
memory, 56, 207, 215, 230, 233, 262
metalepsis/narrative transgression, 163–164, 169–173; de Jong (on), 164
Milesian tale, 255–257
mimesis/mimetic performance, 165, 171
money, 209–210
move (theory), 31, 47, 48
Muses, 34, 111, 116–117

narrative: orientation and evaluation, 169 n.35; rules for (*Republic* III), 169–170; transmission, 156–157
narrator: main, 31–51 (*passim*) (*see also* Homer); character-, 31–33, 37, 48
neo-Platonism, 184, 191, 195–197, 198
notes (*see* memoranda)

Odysseus, 5, 6–20 (*passim*), 37–45
'oral subterfuge', 116
orality, 3–6, 20–22, 184–186, 191, 193, 201–226 (*passim*), 228

paideia/pepaideumenos, 198, 228, 231–233, 236, 237–238, 239–241
Palestinian weddings, verbal dueling at, 67
pan-traditionality, 56
parainesis/injunction, 175–177
pārāyaṇa (*see* text, silent reading of)
parchment, 258
participation: dramatic, 158; scripted/unscripted, 165
Parry, Milman, 58 n.6, 61, 89–90
Penelope, 5, 6–20 (*passim*), 38 n.34, 44
performance, 25–51 (*passim*), 89–109, 111–126, 157–163, 183, 227–241 (*passim*), 245–263 (*passim*); arena, 111, 159; choice of language in, 141–145; competence in, 56, 60–69; mode of delivery, 140; role of Sanskrit in, 140–145; role of text in, 140; role of vernacular in, 140; *see also* recomposition in
performative: acts, 97–98; character of education, 228, 230, 233, 235, 237, 238–240; context, 33, 206–207; discontinuities, 94
performer, 69, 203, 219, 221, 236–237, 245–263
Pergamene Boy, 248
Persius, 255
Phemius, 26, 33–36
philia, 209–210
philosophy, 184–186, 152–173, 177–180, 238–240
Plato, dialogue and performance, 157–163
poetry, 190, 198
pragmatics vs. syntax, 95–99, 102–106, 106–107
prayer, 117–118
pre-Socratic philosophy, 184
'presence': and access to narrated events, 167; and emotion, 166; spectating/participating 166–167; and time/tense 165–166
priamel, 247
protreptic (function), 152
purāṇa/purāṇas: classes of, 129–130; meaning of, 129; study of, 131
Pythagoreanism, 184–185

question, 48, 169, 171, 172
quotation, 228, 257

reader, 206–207
reading, 203–207, 212–213, 220, 221; aloud, 212; skills, 204–205, 206, 228–241 (*passim*)
recital, 248
recitare, 249
recognition scene, 5–22 (*passim*)
recomposition in performance, 4–5
ritual, 115

Sanskrit, use of, 140
saptāh: contemporary performance of, 131; content of, 138–139; definition of, 130–131; feminine metaphors and, 142; language of, 132; traditional instructions for, 131
schedium, 254
scholia, 188–189
Scott, William, 73–76
Second Sophistic, 227–241 (*passim*)
simile family, 73
simileme, 73–76
similes, 57–82 (*passim*); idiolectal, 69–71, 80–81; in Najdi poetry, 65–66, 69–71; shared, 69; in South Slavic (Bosniac) epic, 60, 66, 69–70. *See also* Homeric similes
simulation acting, 178–179
singer, 32–51 (*passim*), 56–82 (*passim*), 89–107 (*passim*), 202
Sîrat Banî Hilâl, 66
song, 25, 31–51 (*passim*), 89–109 (*passim*)
South Slavic: decasyllable, 91; epic similes (*see* similes); epic tradition, 91
spectacle, 170

spectating/participating, 166–167; and social cognition, 157 n.14
speech: act, 31–32, 48, 50; character-, 120; direct, 25–27, 30–32, 42, 46–47, 49, 169–170, 171; free indirect, 26–30, 37–39, 44, 45, 50; indirect, 26–27, 32, 37, 43, 169–170, 172; mention, 26–27, 32–33, 45; presentation 44, 46, 49, 50, 51
'structuring', 100
supplemental departures, 151, 155, 177
symposium, 238–239

tablets (wax), 252
temporal clauses, 96, 98–99
text: as focus of ritual, 135–138; in oral performance, 132; as source of narrative, 138–139; silent reading of, 139–140
textual criticism, 4–7
theater: of identification/presence, 162–163, 175–176; of the mind, 124–125; and emotional engagement, 162; and empathy, 162–163; and substitution, 162–163; vs simple mimetic theater, 162–163
Trojan War, 37–45, 246, 248
'turbulence', 101
typicality, 7, 17–19, 21

Vergil, 256–257, 259–261

wages, 209–210
Widow of Ephesus, 256, 262
wisdom literature, 114
writing, 201–226 (*passim*), 252, 258; handwriting, 204–205; silence of, 152–153; and helper arguments, 153
written laws, 215–216, 221

Yaqub, Nadia, 67–68